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THE THREE GHOSTS OF AMERICA

By ANDRÉ MAUROIS

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY JACQUES CHAMBRUN

Has America come of age? In a sympathetic article, M. Maurois indicates that we are approaching maturity somewhat to the dismay of our family ghosts. The college youths whom he taught during his recent visit to the United States are haunted by the ghost of the Puritan. The other two spirits are present in unexpected places—lifeless but nonetheless influential. The spirit and style of M. Maurois's article is in refreshing contrast to that of most of the foreign critics of the United States.

I HAVE just spent four months in the eastern part of the United States. Everywhere, in the autumn woods, on the snowclad plains, or in the streets of New York or Boston, I have run across three ghosts, so real that sometimes I thought they were alive.

I

Often, while walking in the country, it was difficult to realize that an ocean separated me from the countryside in Europe. On an Île-de-France blue sky fleecy clouds paint a Corot or a Manet. But, as soon as the eye comes upon a house the illusion is dispelled. The American house savors of the exotic and the colonial. A wooden house, painted a pale gray, almost white, brings to mind Charlie Chaplin's films and tales of pioneers. To eyes accustomed to the solidity of brick and stone, this wood seems frail and temporary. A foreigner's error, this, wood here is durable and many of these houses are old. In the village cemeteries the weather-worn tombstones show venerable dates.

Descendant of an old English family
He forsook earthly glories
To save himself from sin.
A. D. 1729.

On the outskirts of Princeton, in a Quaker graveyard, the tombstones are uncarved. Not even a name. No desire to perpetuate an earthly memory when only salvation matters. At the cemetery

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entrance stands a wooden chapel, under the shelter of which pious farmers once hitched their horses during church services. An ascetic background which an European must recreate if he wishes to understand the American.

But when, after having refound the Puritan in rural America, the European seeks him among the living, he finds only a ghost. True, they tell him that the type still exists; that he could find innumerable examples in the Central States and even in certain sections of New York. This the European is quite ready to believe; but, among the Americans he knows and who are his friends, as well as among young college men and women, he finds that Puritanism is only a survival. Diverse influences, easy living, and the Latin influx have ruined it. Modern science made the first breach, so far as its becoming a world standard is concerned. To Biblical theology has succeeded a modernistic religion and, in certain people, a total absence of religion. Prohibition, a result of Puritanical morals, gave it its death-blow by transforming a vice into a revolt. A great part of America has remained faithful by habit and by taste to family life and decency. But, almost everywhere, groups of young rebels have wanted to break away from the old order. Post-War cynicism set itself against nineteenth-century hypocrisy. Psychiatrists, disciples of Freud, furthered this movement by furnishing a vocabulary, which, at will, permitted everything to be said in triumphing over old-time inhibitions. Easy divorce has made of marriage a legal adventure. Neo-Malthusianism has suppressed normal disapproval of debauchery. The descendants of the Puritans tried out the difficult vocation of libertinism.

They did not like it. The more frank, the better ones among them, realize that they do not feel at home in it. It is not only beneath the stones of the graveyards that the ghosts of Pilgrims wander dissatisfied. They haunt, these great Puritan souls, the spirits that believe themselves freed. With many young Americans, an intelligence, scientific and lucid, adjudges the gestures of love as without importance—a natural instinct which must be satisfied. But, as soon as they allow sensual freedom to govern their actions, they are surprised to hear within themselves a voice, strange and irritated. The Puritan lifts the stone from his grave. This Commander is always present at the festivities of a New Jersey Don Juan. As in the Overture in "Tannhäuser," the Pilgrims' chorus is mixed with the songs of Venusberg, distorting them with sharp discords. What they call French "realism" shocks them and charms them at the same time. The reason so many of them take to drink is that only drunkenness gives to desire sufficient strength to drown the voice of the Puritan. Many, after a few attempts, give up. "I have tried it," a young professor would tell me. "I was not made for a free life. Liberty is action. When sincere with myself, I wish for inaction. I need to be quiet to be in harmony with myself. My religion is of the brain, not of the heart."

It is this conflict that makes the American of 1931 such an interesting human being. It is he who has created, in a few years, such a remarkable young literature. America is in pursuit of ethics. Even Babbitt, in his naïve way, is a person seeking a new doctrine. In the French novels which I used to read with my students, they sought a rule of life rather than erudition. The "Disciple," by Bourget, interests them because it presents the problem of free-will. In French literature they prefer the seventeenth century to the nineteenth, because it brings out the definite, the moralists.

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The generation that is now twenty years old is altogether different from that which had reached this age just after the War. Then one saw—as Thomas Beer, the American writer, has said—"a serial production" of rebels. It was necessary every morning to destroy a Bastille. "But, destroying a Bastille is not building a new city. . . . What spiritual city are we going to build?" The better element of the young men ask themselves this. One of the young students said to me: "My father and mother lived very strictly. . . . I have a great deal of admiration for their lives. Most certainly there was much that was bad about the hypocrisy of 1880. But there is much hypocrisy in the aggressive liberty of to-day." I asked him: "Do many of your friends think as you do?" "Nearly all think as I do," he replied. "Very few dare to say so. They speak of wine and of women, but that does not amuse them." And, behind the face of this adolescent, I saw for a fleeting instant the austere features of the Puritan.

The Puritan of the seventeenth century was a sort of hero. But the ghosts of heroes have none of their virtues and can only frighten the living. The ghost of the Puritan has inspired in the electors of the United States futile and severe laws destined, apparently, to uproot "sin" from the heart of man. The ghost of the Puritan has given the police of New York and Chicago the task of transforming millions of sinners into Latter Day Saints. Now, it is impossible to make the code of a Methodist community the laws of a great country. "Sooner or later," said Walter Lippmann, "the American people will have to make up their minds to bring their legislative ideals down to the point where they square with prevailing human nature." America will not be able to find her moral equilibrium until she has at last exorcised the spectre of the Puritan.

II

The traveller in France or England recognizes in each a country where the entire surface of the earth is occupied by man, and has been for centuries. Each village is a thing complete. One feels that it will grow no more, that it has its own form, that it is linked with the road, the railway, the fields, and the prairies that surround it. In America, as soon as a Frenchman gets out of the large city, he imagines himself in the wilderness. At Princeton, a small yet old town, certain streets end abruptly on the fringe of a desert. From the well-kept asphalt pavement you pass at once to yellow grass stretching away to the horizon. This impression is stronger still when one leaves the seaboard. Prairies without a human being; immense lakes surrounded by tiny wooden houses; the outline of cities planned rather than actually built, where advertising posters make their bid for settlers; rocky valleys; snow-covered deserts; a country where nature is still supreme and which has only just received its pioneers.

America resembles a precocious child, whose cleverness and daring make one forget his age. It resembles those adolescents, sole heirs to an immense fortune, whom old men reluctantly admit to directors' meetings. It has attained its majority in the Society of Human Beings, but its youthfulness is still appalling. About the year 1810 New England farmers, suffering from the economic consequences of the Napoleonic wars, arrived—wearing broad-brimmed felt hats, guns slung over their backs, and with cartridges in their belts—to fell the forests of Indiana and Illinois, and to build their first cabins. It was in 1869 that two strange locomotives, pushing snow-plows, met north of the Great Salt

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Lake, and the Southern Pacific Railroad made possible the development of the Far West. It was only yesterday that an American, in any crisis, could still say: "I am going away," that he could, after travelling a few days on horseback, find country new, rich, and unexploited, where land was given him freely and where every vigorous man was welcome.

During the entire nineteenth century, the pioneer represented the true American type. Naturally, he acquired those traits which are characteristic of founders. The pioneer is benevolent because for him man is not a competitor, but a partner in the struggle against nature. He believes in equality, because, in the wilds, birth counts for nothing. He esteems a man of action and scorns a dreamer, because incessant action is a necessity in communities as yet hardly established. He is chivalrous, because women are few and precious, and because in a semi-lawless country, religious respect alone affords them any protection. He takes scant interest in the central government, and attends to his affairs himself; his sheriff is the one who, as a last resort, metes out a justice summary and crude, and his deputies execute his sentences. He is a nomad because he has found that the best remedy, in case of misfortune, is to move on. He has not formed very strict ideas regarding honesty in politics, because the nomad, ready to go, is not afraid of the opinion of the crowd, as is the stay-at-home. And finally, he is an optimist because he lives in a country that has never betrayed him, and because he knows that a strong, daring man may always succeed a little farther on.

Such was the "pioneer of space," the man of the ever-receding frontier, whose broad-brimmed hat, galloping horse and long gun enlivened the films of 1912. But even then, in the real America, he was only a movie hero. After the West, he had been able to colonize the Far West. Then he had reached other shores. The flight through a virgin forest, this romanticism in action, was becoming difficult. Already some time ago, in the East and in the Middle West, a new type of American had been born; I would call him the "pioneer of time," because he sought his free lands and virgin forests in the future. Through immigration and birth, the population of the United States had increased rapidly. All speculation (and a speculation is always an anticipation) seemed guaranteed by the increase in the value of human capital. New inventions compelled the creation of new industries. The beautiful game of action might continue. A few years ago, Madariaga, the Spaniard, compared this country to an immense nursery full of the most marvellous toys. Who was the gigantic Santa Claus who invented the skyscraper? And who was this boy who had conceived, at Detroit, the admirable idea of giving a real carriage to all the rest of the boys? For the creator of industry, for the speculator, and for the banker, woman remained a remote being, scarcely seen, that one could adore and defend. The pioneer of time, up to 1929, was as optimistic, as individualistic, chivalrous, puerile, and generous as had been the pioneer of space.

In the last two years it has seemed as though the American of the former dimension had again reached the frontier that does not recede—the shores of the Ocean of Overproduction. More than ever before, he feels ready to act, to create, to produce. But he no longer finds a partner who will play, in this fine game, the other part, that of consumer. None of the boys want to be the horse. For the first time since the Pilgrim voyagers detected signs of land, "the floating branches, the wild birds,

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and the distant odor of forests," the pioneers in astonishment have asked themselves whether leisure might not become a duty. It is difficult to say whether or not the present crisis proves that a point of saturation has been reached, and that, from now on, American prosperity must become static rather than dynamic. But, whether it be in 1931 or in 1950, that moment will come. The pioneer of space as well as the pioneer of time is a species doomed by its own success.

One may regret him; he had the charm and awkwardness of happiness. But, in a country that has reached maturity, it is impossible to retain the characteristics of childhood. There will still be pioneers in certain new industries, as well as in difficult territories, but the mass of the nation will have to learn the habits of the stay-at-home. In the East, one already notices the disappearance of primitive optimism. Culture of mind is spreading and, as everywhere else, it brings doubt along with it—which is painful and wholesome. The reign of woman is not at an end, but freedom of morals, the keener taste of young men for thought, the economic rivalry between the sexes, permit one to foresee its early end. Woman in America, as in Europe, will have to learn other methods in order to retain her power. Already she is in process of learning them.

The period of adaptation will be hard. The pioneer, forced into retirement by success, will, for several decades, be like the officers of Napoleon's army—put on half-pay in 1815 and dreaming all their lives of past glory. Apprenticeship to leisure is difficult for a man of action. But the pioneer, like the Puritan, will be slowly exorcised. "America Comes of Age" is the title of a book by Siegfried, and the connotation is accurate. America has come of age; its noisy childhood has ended.

III

In most human groups, one sees raised above other men certain chiefs or nobles to whom the people grant certain privileges in exchange for certain services; at first the part played by the noble is especially that of war lord. Whether by his courage and strength, or by his ability and shrewdness, he protects his vassals and leads them to victory. Later, the feudal lord maintains internal order. He safeguards the people on his domain against attacks by other lords; he maintains justice and forbids acts of violence.

As soon as law and order have become accepted in a country, the people—ungrateful but reasonable—recognize that the lord, from that time on, offers as many drawbacks as advantages. He is a protection against other lords, to be sure, but he feels a bit too keen a pleasure in these virtuous combats. Very often it is he himself who provokes his neighbors and precipitates the causes of conflict. Add to this that he is an expensive luxury; that his descendants, who succeed him, are generally lacking in the strength and prudence of their ancestor; that the fights between one castle and another endanger the common people, and, with the passing of the centuries, the desire to get rid of him takes root. As soon as the improvement in arms renders his castle and his armor vulnerable, the masses group themselves around a central government—and there is an end to the great feudalists. They had been useful; they have ceased to be; they are doomed. Such was the history of France; such will be the history of America, which is still—in part, at least—in the feudal period.

To a Frenchman in America, one of the most striking features is the lack of central government. The government at Washington has nothing in common with that sole source of power which is

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the Government in Paris, handed down to the Republic by those two great centralizers, Louis XIV and Napoleon. Some of the most important functions of European government do not exist in America at all. For instance, you find no Minister of Public Instruction. "How is that?" Americans will say. "There is one in every State of the Union!" True enough, but this multiplicity prevents all unity of programme, of teaching. Besides, even in each State, this Minister has no control over the better universities, which are private institutions. The president of the United States, the great political parties, the State governors, the senators—all these, in the final analysis, are dependent for their power on those who, in the France of Louis XI, were termed "the great vassals."

In America, these big feudalists are money lords. They belong to a nobility that sprang from various origins. Some of them grew up legally, at least to all appearances. These are the lords of banks, of industry, and of commerce. They, with the Puritans and the pioneers, made this great country. Many of their families form an aristocracy very much like that of our European monarchies. A great American lord may be called John B. Smith 7th; in two hundred years, his great-grandnephew will be John B. Smith 23d, provided the Smith dynasty lasts. They have customs quite similar, *mutatis mutandis,* to those of the lords of the middle ages. They love fights—bank against bank, trust against trust, market decline against market decline. In an industrial epoch, a tournament can be only economic. They are courteous and friendly and, after having broken lances "downtown," they meet in the evening at dinner, with the ladies, in the castles of Park Avenue. In the middle ages, people of their rank endowed monasteries. Here they endow universities and impose upon the *abbé* of Yale or of Harvard prayers for the founder—just like Henry II of England or François Dagobert. This type of the feudalism of money is still in existence in Europe, although it meets with greater opposition than in the United States, from more idealistic political parties and a more organized bureaucracy. But, alongside this aristocracy of wealth, there is growing up, in America, an aristocracy of adventure—such as has almost entirely disappeared in Europe. Not unlike the Italians in French sixteenth-century politics and the Irish of Tammany Hall, the great Democratic or Republican politicians have made a place for themselves among the powers of the country. In the creation of this class, racketeers and bootleggers play the same part as did the pirates and pillaging nomads who descended from the Norman nobility. The Chicago racketeer is a feudalist. He threatens merchants, he obtains annual tribute from them; and, in exchange, he gives them his protection against other bandits. "He sells peace," says an American writer, which is precisely what our overlords used to sell. Al Capone is Gilles de Retz—more powerful and less cruel—surrounded, as was our French Blue Beard, by his armed men; but Al Capone's are in tuxedos and have machine-guns in their cars.

Why does this bellicose feudalism retain in America the power and prestige that it lost with us long ago? Why does the American public tolerate with amusement a tournament so dangerous to spectators? These are questions that the European traveller asks himself in amazement. He is, for instance, astonished to read in the newspapers that, after a hold-up in one of the busiest streets of New York—in full daylight—the hold-up men were able to make their escape in an automobile, under the very eyes of a crowd of indifferent spec-

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tators. Should a large city form a committee of citizens to combat the "crime wave," a European is stupefied to find that such a much-needed crusade awakens no enthusiasm whatsoever. Later, when he gets to know the country a little better, he realizes that in the absence of the idea of a central power (the State being less powerful in America than in Europe) these duels between bandit chiefs are looked upon by the man in the street as those of a Montmorency were looked upon by Frenchmen before the time of Richelieu. And, as for the merchants' being "taxed" at pleasure—as were the serfs in the middle ages—they prefer getting relative peace through the grace of Al Capone to getting it from a rather impotent police force.

But the citizens will tire of these noisy and dangerous games. The natural evolution of the United States is being slowed up, just now, by that absurd prohibition law, which makes half the country the accomplice of the bootlegger. This situation cannot last. Again, as Walter Lippmann says so well: "Sooner or later the American people will have to make up their minds either to bring their legislative ideals down to the point where they square with prevailing human nature or they will have to establish an administrative despotism strong enough to begin enforcing their moral ideals." At that instant public opinion will cease to sustain the robber barons and they will disappear.

As for economic feudalism, I think it, too, is destined to recognize the need of a stronger central power. The economic machine has become too complex to be abandoned to private quarrels. When a scientific invention can, in a few months' time, deprive thousands of workmen of their employment, it is necessary for a strong power to watch over its application. When the money of the common people is invested in great enterprises, it is necessary that stern control be exercised by representatives of the State. The United States—like Europe, only more slowly—whether they like it or not, will come to a more and more developed State socialism. Since they have the taste for new formulas and the courage to put them into practice, I should not be at all surprised to see them invent a new form of government, where great organizations of workers, of producers, and of consumers would regulate the economic life of the country outside the political parliament. This was, I believe, also the opinion of Keyserling. But, whatever the form of this central power in the future, the feudalist, like the Puritan and the pioneer, will have to transform himself or disappear.

IV

The Puritan, the pioneer, and the feudalist are ghosts, because their species will not be able to adapt themselves to a world such as it will become. Like all ghosts, they have, and will continue to have for a long time, a real existence in the soul of the living. It is only after their death that we understand the tremendous rôle people have played in our lives. I do not complain of the occult presence of the three ghosts. They bring into the American atmosphere the uneasiness and mystery which add to the present the weight and solidity of the past. But their images are gradually fading out. The young American asks himself: "What city of the future are we going to create?" No one can tell but, in that city—in which the men of 1931 will, in their turn, be the ghosts—there will certainly be no room for the three spectres (already fading) of Pre-War America.

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Sex and the Law

By HELEN BUCKLER

In practically all parts of the United States woman is threatened by archaic laws which concern sex offenses, according to the evidence presented by Miss Buckler. The country has been shocked by the revelations of the New York vice investigation. The conclusions drawn from this survey point out that the roots of the evil go deeper than official graft and corruption.

For all the excitement over the recent New York City vice-scandal, the full horror of the situation has yet to be appreciated. The disturbing revelation of the mishandling of women in the nation's leading metropolis is a picture, if somewhat out of focus, of what is happening the country over.

The evil is not local. Nor is it entirely due, as many suppose, to the character of the policemen and magistrates administering the law. The fundamental evil is in the character of the law itself. And in this respect, not New York City alone, but the whole country is at fault. If no woman is safe in New York, neither is she safe in almost any other town or city you care to name—as I shall cite evidence to show.

Indignation and a sense of outraged justice leaped up when it became known that within two years seventy-seven girls had been illegally committed by New York magistrates to the State reformatory on charges of immorality; that members of the police force itself were growing rich in the process of "framing" innocent persons and "shaking down" physicians and landladies with professional reputations at stake; that fee-boosting and fee-splitting for the benefit of unscrupulous lawyers, bondsmen, and policemen were matters of course.

A hard-working mother with a sick husband and several children to support, a wife whose lameness perhaps made her and her husband but more devoted to each other, a respectable young married business woman, a nurse in a doctor's office—the most innocent women, as well as those whose past records left them peculiarly at the mercy of any accusation—no one was safe from certain policemen intent on showing avid vice-crusaders a creditable record of arrests—and incidentally piling up interesting bank accounts for themselves. The unattested word of policemen that an "unknown man" had been implicated sufficed the courts. All these outrages were disclosed, and more. Physical violence had been suffered, too, and in at least one case corroborated evidence was produced to show that an inebriated officer had attempted to rape the woman he arrested. To all such proceedings the magistracy, it appeared, was at the best blind, at the worst complaisant.

As a result of these disturbing revelations the most obvious offenders were promptly dismissed from the po-

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lice force. The entire membership of the vice squad was replaced by new men and certain changes were made in the procedure of arrests, including the elimination of that outrageous figure, the "unknown man." Magistrates sitting in the Woman's Court were given other benches. At once both the number of women arrested and the prison population sharply declined.

The improvement is more apparent than real. Indeed the Chief Justice of the Court of Special Sessions has indicated his belief that the situation will "return to something approaching normal" as soon as the new vice squad "gets into the swing of its work." In other words we can expect in a short while to be right back where we were. And the reason is that the clean-up has been directed at the wrong factors.

To spank Tammany, to put new men into office, is not enough. It is not enough to congratulate oneself that one does not live in New York. The only really adequate thing to do is to examine the laws from which these evils derive, to see just what they are, how they work, and why we have them.

I

Stated in a sentence, this country is ridden by a body of laws dealing with sex matters which are absurdly archaic and barbarously unethical. To point out that in a certain town in the East a person can commit adultery on one side of the street and get off with a $10 fine, but if he is stupid enough to commit the same act on the opposite side of the street, he may be fined $500 and given a year in jail for good measure—makes the thing look like a farce. To finish the story is to point out its tragedy.

In the first place, American law divides the responsibility for so-called sex offenses unequally and leaves the greater share of the burden on women. By their very nature, our laws allow mediævally-minded officials to make injustice still greater in their enforcement. Derived from an almost inextricable tangle of ancient Hebrew, mediæval Christian, and early Puritan tradition, most of the basic assumptions of these laws have been repudiated by later thinkers. The statutes cannot be completely enforced because most people do not want them completely enforced, yet as long as their provisions leave a considerable body of citizens without the pale of legal protection, they invite corruption.

Just thirteen of the forty-eight States even pretend to hold equally guilty with the women who ply Mrs. Warren's profession those men who support that profession. Men may be chargeable in twelve other States for frequenting or loitering in houses of ill-fame. Which is not to say that men are actually committed in these States. Fully fifteen States, moreover, and the District of Columbia maintain that women alone are liable for the act of prostitution. Some States commit the absurdity of making it a crime to solicit for an act which is not in itself a crime. By definition (and California, New York, and Iowa courts have upheld this position) prostitution is a practice of women only. Whatever the technicalities may be, the morality of the argument belongs to the Dark Ages. It cannot but be offensive to a sensitive conception of justice to consider a scene common to too many of our courts. A man appears to testify that a woman is guilty of an act to which he himself was partner. As a result of his testimony she is sentenced to imprisonment. He walks out the door quite free to pursue his life as he pleases—conceivably to participate, still blamelessly, in further situations for which other women will be incarcerated.

In addition to prostitution laws, most

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States have statutes attempting to confine all sex acts to bona-fide married couples. Adultery is penalized in all but two States with punishments ranging from a fine of $10 in Maryland to as much as five years' imprisonment in Maine, Connecticut, and California. The States have varying views as to who may be held guilty of adultery: some so hold both parties to the act, some hold only the married party, some do not hold the married party unless it is a woman. Twenty-eight States consider that a single act of adultery makes a person a criminal, but eighteen other States wait for the offense to become habitual.

A voluntary act of sex relation between unmarried persons is a crime in seventeen States. Cohabitation openly engaged in without legal marriage is considered "lewd and lascivious" and therefore a crime in twenty States. The penalties vary from a $10 fine to one of $500 and a year's imprisonment.

Some of these laws have grown inoperative, at least as far as men are concerned. In other States they are invoked to convict a prostitute where other statute, or evidence of money transaction, is lacking. Elsewhere the difficulties of their enforcement make them dead letters. In New York State something like 5,000 divorces are granted yearly. The only allowable cause is adultery. If the law then were duly enforced we should expect in that State something like 10,000 convictions each year for adultery. As a matter of fact there are practically none, a circumstance for which the taxpayer may congratulate himself. The maintenance of 10,000 people in jail for six months a year would add a considerable item to every family budget.

Great as are the inequalities of the laws, these are further enhanced by the inequalities in administering them. Regardless of the statutes, policemen are somehow less prone to arrest men than women and judges are similarly less prone to find them guilty.

II

Boston police records for one year show only 1.2 per cent of arrested men are taken up on account of forbidden sex acts, while 11.2 per cent of arrested women are accused of similar crimes. In St. Louis in a year only one-half of 1 per cent of arrested men are charged with the dereliction under discussion, but more than 9 per cent of arrested women are so charged—a disproportion of 18 to 1.

A carefully documented study of the Misdemeanants' Division of the Philadelphia Municipal Court gives ample evidence that judges are not meting out similar treatment to men and women for similar offenses. Another study shows a comparable discrimination in Paterson. Yet both Pennsylvania and New Jersey have laws whereby men may be convicted along with the prostitutes they patronize.

Recently I had occasion in connection with some articles I was writing to visit large numbers of jails in various States and also half of the leading women's reformatories in the country. By constant repetition in jail after jail, reformatory after reformatory, State after State, it was impressed upon me as no mere statistical report could ever do that by far the greater proportion of women incarcerated in penal institutions are confined for committing so-called sex offenses. Moreover, I found, this high proportion in the women's institutions has no counterpart in the institutions for men. In other words, women go to prison in large numbers for acts that when committed by men are not considered criminal at all. A generation accustomed to the idea that women are entitled to equality has perhaps jumped

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to the conclusion that they have it. But here are the facts.

Of the men committed to its penal institutions by New Jersey in one year, about 11 per cent went in for sex offenses. Of the women who lost their freedom during the same year, 61 per cent incurred the wrath of the law for the same sort of crime—a disproportion of almost 6 to 1. Other States are only more or less discriminatory. In Massachusetts the figure is 8 to 1 against women, Connecticut 6 to 1, New York 13 to 1. Even in as tolerant a State as Wisconsin, the disproportion is 2 to 1.

If I had eliminated from the figures cases involving violent attack, the disproportions would be still greater. Thus in two years Connecticut sent only 3 young men to the reformatory for fornication, but in the same period 54 young women went to Niantic for this crime; 1 young man went up for "lascivious carriage" and 41 young women were found guilty of the same offense—for which, by the way, I was able to get no definition.

Now if we were considering some other crime, say murder, we might deduce from these figures that women are from five to thirteen times as homicidal as men. But we can scarcely affront common sense and common knowledge with the assumption that women are to this degree more inclined to extra-legal sex acts than men are. Among offenses classified as "sex" there are but few that can be committed by a single person: indecent exposure, rape, procuring. The great bulk of sex offenses happen to be acts in which two necessarily participate. We can only conclude, then, that it is not the act itself nor the participation of men, but the fact that women engage in it which offends the majesty of the law.

Of the women who are receiving the long reformatory sentences in this affair, not all are prostitutes—no, nor any large proportion of them. It is not the woman who has made commercial gain out of her sex relations who is getting punished, but the woman who has "loved not wisely but too well."

Of the 50-odd young women returned to the New York City courts from Bedford as illegally committed, 18 carried babies. This was proof to some people that these young women were not so "innocent" after all. In other more discerning eyes it was proof that we are punishing not the hardened professional, for she manages not to have babies, but young women more in need of help and sympathy than punishment.

In one State institution 95 out of 227 women were committed for sex offenses. Of the 95, only 21 were charged with one or another aspect of commercial vice. In another State institution, 202 out of 290 women were committed for sex offenses, but of the 202 only 20 were charged with prostitution. The superintendent of this latter institution told me it was her conviction that not more than 10 of these 20 had actually received money. A woman of extensive experience in the penal institutions of the country, she said, "It isn't the professional who gets the long sentence. She is clever enough to get off with a fine, or at most a short jail sentence. It is the woman whose affections lead her astray, who gets the heavy sentence."

Here are a few cases chosen at random. The names have been changed, the facts are unaltered.

Sarah Brown had married at fourteen and had borne three children to a husband who was continually drunk and who constantly abused her. At twenty-seven, after more than a dozen years of this miserable existence, she found solace in the friendship of another and kinder man. "He gave presents to my children," she said. If there were ever

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justification for an illicit relationship, Sarah Brown seemed to have it. But Sam Brown felt himself outraged. He promptly invoked the law and the law upheld him in his grievance. Sarah was sentenced to the reformatory for five years. Her lover received *one month* in jail. Her husband, who by his conduct had driven her into adultery, was duly avenged. I might add that after a few months his anger cooled and he begged to have Sarah released. The law, with perfect amiability, acceded to his request.

Beatrice Lenox, at twenty-two, was separated from her husband. She supported their four-year-old child by working as a waitress. From time to time she had a "date" with George O'Connell, who drove a truck for a local concern. Finally George reported to the authorities that he had contracted a venereal disease from her. She was charged with having had illicit sex relations, taken away from her child, and committed to the reformatory for three years. George continued his job and his social relations with no restraint from the law, merely being advised by the court, though not compelled, to take medical treatment.

Stella Rawson was sent out to work early and before she was sixteen was contributing to the family budget. She was a pretty girl, if not very quick, and William Pierce, a crony of her father's, noticed the fact. He had little difficulty in persuading Rawson to let him see a good deal of Stella, though the girl's father knew the man had a wife and two children. Indeed, it was not long before the ingenuous arrangement was made whereby Stella no longer went out to work, and Pierce paid her father ten dollars a week for her "board" in her own home. The fact that his daughter had lost her virtue under his own roof and with his tacit approval did not upset Rawson at all until William got behind several weeks with Stella's "board." A little liquor added to Rawson's sense of injustice one night and he called in the police. Evidently he had not counted on it, but the whole story came out. Pierce got six months. Rawson, for his greater heinousness, got ten months. As if nature itself had not overpunished Stella already with the burden of the baby she was to bear, the judge sent her up for three years.

It is not pleasant delving into prison cases. But there they are, and some one is responsible. Gertrude is in for ten years. What has she done? Fallen victim, at seventeen, to her own father. Her mother knows the state of affairs, but is afraid or ashamed to reveal it. Before she is twenty-one the girl bears two incestuous children, the second in a boarding house where her father has taken her. The boarding-house proprietor calls the police. The father gets one to two years. The victimized girl gets ten.

Visit almost any institution where women are confined by law and you will find similar cases. Anna Jones is in the reformatory because she has an illegitimate baby. (Many commitment papers in one institution I visited read simply "pregnancy.") The baby's father comes on visitor's day to call on Anna. He is likewise the father of another girl's two illegitimate children. No attempt has ever been made to arrest him, though he is chargeable for bastardy as well as for incontinence.

It might be argued that the modern reformatory on industrial-farm-cottage plan is designed to be corrective, not punitive, and that these women are sent there for their own good. The fact remains that they are deprived of their freedom, torn from their children (except that some States allow the bringing in of a baby under one or two years), and embittered to an extent which nega-

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tives any benefit they receive. As for the men who are equally as guilty as the women, if not more so—is any effort made to "reform" them? Are they deprived of their freedom for years during which the State attempts to make them over?

That the institutional stigma is early and irrevocably laid on so many young girls is perhaps the saddest part of this sad affair. The juvenile homes show just as great disproportions as the adult institutions. Parents will turn a troublesome daughter over to the juvenile courts more quickly than a son, because they fear the danger and consequent disgrace of her becoming pregnant. With the efficacy of institutional incarceration for social rehabilitation being questioned more and more every day, the procedure becomes doubly unjust. Stamped with the mark of the institution, forced into association with all the other ill-adjusted girls like themselves in the State, it is little chance these youngsters have to avoid continued delinquency.

"If the same amount of money spent in institutions on girls who are sex offenders were spent to take care of them and adjust them to the community without sending them to institutions, they would be far better off," says the superintendent of one of the best women's reformatories in the country. She, a member of the bar, represents the more enlightened opinion which has yet to be accepted generally.

III

How did the outrageous legislation upon which this unjust situation rests come into being? The truth is, we are attempting to operate to-day under the vestigial remains of two ancient and long discountenanced philosophies—first, the pagan and early Hebrew idea that woman was the complete property of man; and second, the post-Apostolic idea of dualism and the essential evil of the flesh.

When women belonged body and soul first to their fathers and then to the husbands who purchased them for a price, the law protected their owners in this as in other matters of property—land, cattle, and so on. A woman always represented so much potential money. Since her father had to guarantee her virginity to the man who bought her and was forced to refund the money if she proved not to be as represented, the law gave him recourse against the man who violated her chastity and thus reduced her salability on the open market. The twenty-second chapter of Exodus states the provision that the trespasser must pay her father the sum she would have fetched as a virgin: 50 shekels of silver. The man who stole privileges with the wife, for whom good money had been expended, likewise paid, and even more heavily, for his life and hers were forfeit. In Anglo-Saxon times the damage was payable in money and the adulterer was sometimes required to furnish another wife to replace the one whose value he had impaired.

If this seems far away and long ago, let me cite the law of Minnesota which still provides that a husband may collect money damages from the man who enjoys his wife's favors. The citizen of Maryland who discovers his wife to have been unchaste before marriage may divorce her instantly, though any similar discovery on her part gives her no similar right to divorce him. In Tennessee a wife divorced for adultery and living with the guilty man is rendered incapable of disposing of any of her lands, though, again, no such incapacity is imposed upon a man guilty of similar conduct. Connecticut holds adultery to be a crime only when it involves a married woman. Married men

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consorting with unmarried women are thus guilty of no more than fornication and are liable to no more than six months' imprisonment instead of a possible five years.

It remained for the ascetics of the fourth and fifth centuries to add to the ancient property qualification the idea that the flesh in all its manifestations is evil. When the Puritans fled England they brought with them this sense of sin. That they, who had crossed the ocean to escape ecclesiastical oppression, perpetuated their own stern belief in the body of the law of this country is one of the ironies of history. If we except certain of the more violently anti-social acts, the law of England does not intrude upon private and voluntary sex conduct. When the secular courts gave up trying to enforce their rules, the government did not try to carry on the struggle. But in America we are still entangled in the archaic intricacies of what should never have been a matter of concern to the state.

When the Court of Assistants of Massachusetts Bay met in Charlestown on August 23, 1630, to formulate a new law in a new land, they declared their intention of cutting straight back through all man-made codes and seeking governance in the word of God. On the authority of Leviticus and Deuteronomy, therefore, it was ordered that "If any man shall have carnal copulation with another man's wife, they both shall be punished by death."

When it came to pre-marital acts, however, there was difficulty. I have already pointed out the Old Testament regulation in this respect. Unfortunately for the consistency of the lawmakers, New Englanders were not buying and selling their women as the Children of Israel had done. So they compromised with the word of God—right here begins the complicated tangle which we are still trying to unravel—and ruled that fornication should be punished with fines, whipping, and the order to marry.

The severity of the Massachusetts adultery law was reduced eventually, but not before two men and a woman had gone to their deaths. Other colonies were never so rigorous, preferring to give a severe whipping followed by the same sort of public ignominy suffered in England: the wearing of conspicuous letters of shame—Hawthorne has told the tale—or having the offender "publickly set on the Gallows in the Day Time, with a Rope about his or her Neck, for the Space of One Hour."

IV

Perhaps the nearest that laws against sex expression ever have come to representing the will of the people was in the very early Puritan days in New England. Yet even here the laws were repressive rather than expressive, and therefore attended by ill consequences. Then very soon, as the population became less single-minded, the situation was out of hand, as it had always been in England and as it has been in America ever since.

Yet the laws of the colonial Puritans are, according to the statute books, the law of the United States to-day, the newer States copying the laws of the colonies, even to the identical lurid adjectives—lewd, lascivious, wanton—which had voiced Puritan sentiment in these matters. The laws remain, but the forms of punishment have changed. The whipping-post and the scarlet letter have given way to fine and imprisonment. And the administration has changed most of all. If the Puritan was stern, he was equally stern with men and women, rich and poor alike. His morality, however misguided, was sincere. To-day, as V. F. Calverton recently pointed out in these

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pages, a hypocritical respectability, not morality, is the criterion. Women are oppressed by laws that prove inapplicable to men; rich women escape the punishment that falls grievously on the poorer woman's head. The Park Avenue mistress comes and goes at will, but the tenement prostitute is harried from one cheap address to another.

Occasionally a locality particularly oppressed with its sense of sin still voices that feeling in the traditional Puritanic way. The law still stands, I am told, on the books of one State prohibiting a man's kissing his wife on Sunday, the Lord's day when all expressions of carnal emotion are wicked. Six years ago, with a recklessness worthy of the mediæval Christians themselves (Ernest Sutherland Bates told the story in these pages), the citizens of an Arkansas town forbade sexual intercourse anywhere within the corporate limits, even to the married, unless they were prepared to prove that their act had not been of a "grossly improper and lascivious nature."

Still, changes do come. The anthropologists have shown us that in other latitudes and longitudes other races have not always agreed with us in our sex taboos.* The historians have showed us that we have not always agreed with ourselves.† The new sciences of psychology and sociology and the newer developments in physiology, together with a greater refinement in ethics, have raised many questions in the minds of sincere people as to what standards should prevail. To demand a uniform conduct for all does not seem as wise as once it did.

V

There is no one simple solution for this unhappy confusion. The first reaction of the indignant feminist of militant tradition is, of course, to rush to the legislature with a bill aiming to hold men equally guilty with the women with whom they consort. While I sympathize with their indignation, I fail to see that the answer lies in multiplying the present draconic iniquities. It has been shown that States which already have ample legal means to proceed against men do not do so. No law can be enforced that does not represent the real will of the people. Several years ago Katharine Bement Davis made a study which disclosed the fact that something like 20 per cent of a thousand college-bred women felt that pre-marital sex relations were justifiable. A similar questionnaire to-day would undoubtedly show a still greater proportion. Among men, though no figures are available, it is perfectly safe to assume that from 80 to 90 per cent would take this stand. When laws are enacted in spite of how people really feel, they can only invite extortion and corruption; things grow worse and worse until they culminate in disclosures like the sickening affair in New York City.

Recently I have talked about this matter with a number of men and women who have had years of experience in attempting to deal with this vexing situation: with the former dean of an important law school, with the head of a large municipal crime-prevention bureau, with the ex-warden of a State prison, with the superintendent of several women's reformatories, with lawyers of note, with the legal counsel of a powerful vice clean-up committee in a large city, with social workers.

All were agreed that the strong arm of the law should continue to be used against all phases of compulsion and exploitation. The efficiency of enforcement of these laws might well be improved. The numbers of panderers, pimps, and

*Edward Westermarck, "The Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas."

†Geoffrey May, "Social Control of Sex Expression."

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madames convicted yearly is always pitifully and ineffectually low.

As for the prostitute, what is her profession but the sign of a failure to make an economic adjustment in a happier way? "If we are beginning to feel that the best cure for robbery is prevention," George W. Kirchwey, the well-known penologist, points out, "the idea seems all the more applicable to prostitution. Young girls need better training, better pay, and proper recreation. When they become prostitutes for lack of these things, instead of finding them or punishing them with imprisonment, it seems more intelligent to turn them over to some social agency that can help them adjust in the community where, eventually, they must live."

Perhaps we were on the way to a more generous and tolerant dealing with these matters when the war brought with it startling disclosures of the wide-spread prevalence of syphilis and gonorrhea. In a wave of reactionary fear, an increased severity became the lot of the diseased woman, without any corresponding attention to the diseased male. I have already cited the case of Beatrice Lenox and George O'Connell. Why George could be trusted at large and Beatrice could not is one of those mysteries. Why St. Louis police report 5,533 women "held for Health Commissioner" in one year and only six men, is another. Such tactics in dealing with these two contagious diseases are as logical as quarantining women afflicted with scarlet fever and smallpox and allowing men with those diseases to go abroad.

There has been utter confusion in what should be two distinct problems, legal and health. A number of States, among them Illinois, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Missouri, and Texas, follow the highly questionable procedure of examining arrested women for venereal disease *before* their conviction, and the judge has the medical report in his hands before deciding the case. Where other evidence is insufficient and in spite of the fact that the disease may have been innocently acquired and in spite of the fact that the defendant is thus made to testify against herself, women are committed to penal institutions for no other reason than that they are diseased. It is high time we started thinking and acting about venereal diseases in medical, not criminal, terms.

It was the unanimous opinion of those with whom I discussed the subject, that all laws attempting to deal with private, voluntary sex relations should be repealed. The intention of the adultery statutes was to protect marriage. In actual fact, of course, they do not protect marriage. Adultery is not a cause of trouble in the home, it is a symptom. It is inconceivable that any marriage could resume a felicitous course after such a charge had been brought in court against one of the partners. While the laws continue to exist they are but malicious weapons for the use of any angry spouse animated by a desire for revenge or the wish to do a little polite blackmailing in the way of securing bigger alimony.

The entirely different purpose of the fornication laws is to protect people, not from others, but from themselves—a purpose as presumptuous as it is futile. This sort of legislation never has worked and never will. It sets up an absolute standard of what is right or wrong, wise or unwise, for every individual which is not at all in accord with either present-day evidence or opinion.

If this whole matter were being brought up as a hitherto untreated subject to-day, without the superstitions and prejudices of the past clinging about it, legislators might not rush in where the physician and the psychologist, the sociologist and the philosopher still tread cautiously.

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LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES

SELECTIONS IN SCRIBNER'S PRIZE CONTEST FOR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OR OBSERVATION AT FIRST HAND CONCERNED WITH AN ASPECT OF AMERICAN LIFE

Red Cross and County Agent

By EDMUND WILSON

It is court day in Clayville, Kentucky, and all the men have come in from the hills. The Red Cross is also giving out relief to-day and a man from the Department of Agriculture has come out to explain the federal farm-loans.

The court-house is much the biggest thing in Clayville and completely outbulks and overshadows the few streets of little houses around it. It is built of brick and has big white columns and an iron fence. All around the iron fence and in whatever direction you look there are mules—mules with a scattering of horses. Woolly-bellied and rabbit-eared, with their tails knotted up in blobs behind, buff, almost black, white, but mostly brown that matches the mountains and the mud, they stand waiting, as if with brakes on, absolutely motionless and mute, their heads held against the fences, or shelved up along the side of the dark poplar-bristling hill under the pale blue sky of winter. The owners of the mules, in their blue overalls or yellow coats, their mountaineers' wideawake hats, wander in and out of the court-house, spewing tobacco-juice easily from their mouths, or hang around a man selling cheap shoes, gaudy neckties and rainbow ribbons, or listen to a patent-medicine faker. Some pause for stolid laconic negotiations with two thick-ankled and cotton-stockinged girls whose rouge and powder, modest though it is, there among the hills in broad daylight amounts to a provocation—the negotiations seem usually to fall through and the parties move away from each other. Rangy, yellow black-spotted pigs are out among the people on the streets, rooting in the mud, colliding with the passers-by and from time to time breaking into short sudden gallops.

A little red brick Chevrolet salesroom with a yellow-roofed porte-cochère and an announcement of "A Six in the Price Range of a Four" is the only up-to-date object in sight. There are a certain number of shabby cars, but they are far and away outnumbered by the mules.

Behind the court-house they are trading mules. Trading is the principal amusement in the hills—is, in fact, almost the only amusement. Men in long brown or blue overcoats that hang down on either side of the saddle ride their animals, specially curried and cleaned and with their rumps pulled in behind, back and forth along a sort of mud track. Others stand by and look on phlegmatically, betraying no interest by word or sign. It is like fishing for frogs with flies. Suddenly a man will speak up as some rider passes: "What d'ye

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want for her?" The rider delivers a sales talk, calls attention to the animal's points—as the result of which nine times out of ten the prospective buyer with a shake of his head or a word falls back among the ranks of lookers-on. None the less, the mules change masters so often that some of them must live to pass through the hands of pretty nearly the whole community.

Miss Dabney, the Red Cross worker, is a woman a little over forty. Her face is lined and she is a little dry, but she has live, black eyes behind her pince-nez and a really human and humorous smile. Miss Dabney, up to a certain point in her life, had spent her time either living alone in a hotel in New York or visiting friends and relatives in San Francisco; Washington, Connecticut; Morristown, New Jersey; Oxford and Florence: she has a tremendous admiration for Gilbert Murray, and it was once her ambition to know as much about Italian painting as Bernard Berenson. On one of her trips to Europe, she fell in love with an Italian doctor on the boat. In earlier days, she had a great deal of fun with intelligent little nephews and nieces, to whom her own intelligence appealed: she used to act charades with them and teach them botany. But as time went on, the nephews and nieces grew up and she got tired of visiting people. Since she had known the Italian doctor, she had never felt quite the same about the galleries. Miss Dabney went in for social work in New York and served on the staffs of several foundations. But this turned out very disappointing: she discovered that the people on the foundations drew fat salaries for sitting on committees which met and appointed other committees and ultimately left the real work to underpaid college girls. One day Miss Dabney happened to see a cartoon of an inflated and smug millionaire with a line of parasites trailing behind him and she mentally added the social worker along with the publicity man and the butler. So when the Mississippi flood occurred, she enlisted in the Red Cross and has been working for it ever since.

Miss Dabney, as a Red Cross worker, has not been able to get so close to life as she hoped, because she always feels that she makes poor people shy and that they even on some occasions resent her, and this makes her shy in her relations with them. But her official duties at the present time are largely confined to going around among the local chapters and checking up on the work they are doing, and she is rather good at this because she has authority, poise, and common sense. The people in the local chapters need a good deal of keeping after: they get no pay for their work of raising money, investigating cases and distributing relief, and as they also have their own businesses and household duties, it is sometimes hard for them to get around to Red Cross work. Moreover, though one would never expect it, they try to exploit the Red Cross to their own advantage. On one occasion, a certain merchant on one of Miss Dabney's committees attempted to make deals with the applicants so that they would demand to have their orders made out on his store on condition of his getting their applications granted. And sometimes the tradesmen, bankers, and lawyers and their families from whom the committees have to be recruited seem to Miss Dabney so small-minded and indifferent that she gets cynical about the whole thing.

As for the mountain people themselves, they are really like nothing human. Their standard of living is so low that $3 a week for a family of five, $15 a month for a family of ten, is supposed to provide them with all their necessities, and they are so ignorant that the

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best they can usually do in the way of signing their names to applications is to touch one finger to the end of the pencil. They have never needed money for anything but clothes, and they wear very few of them. They live proverbially on meal, meat, and molasses, which, before the drought set in, they raised for themselves. The meal was made out of corn which they would get ground up at the mill at every crossroads, the molasses was made out of sorghum and the meat was always pork. During the hog-killing season, Miss Dabney was obliged to take part in fatty pork orgies where the conversation consisted chiefly of "Gimme a rib!" and "Gimme a hunk off the jowl!" In other cases, they are most unfriendly: they don't want to be bothered, no matter how badly off they are, and will tell Red Cross workers to get out. Sometimes they insist on eating the corn mixture which has been given them for the cows, even when apparently they don't need to. And though it is true that one sometimes finds them sleeping on corn husks, it is hard to be sure that they haven't always done so.

Their morals, apparently, are frightful—they seem to be in the habit of committing with impunity acts which Miss Dabney knows to be statutory offenses. She found in one of the wilder counties that she had to appoint several investigators instead of one in order to get the different factions taken care of. The original investigator, when told to look into the needs of a hostile community, indignantly protested: "He'p 'em! I wouldn't he'p 'em—I'd shoot 'em down!"

A good many of them, besides, have pellagra—they get listless and their skin dries up and they almost cease to eat. It is said to be caused by their diet, and the Red Cross gives them canned salmon and tomatoes, which are supposed to strengthen their gastric tubes. Miss Dabney has heard the legend that the ancestors of these people were Tories who took to the hills at the time of the Revolution as well as the legend that they are the descendants of the indentured whites of the colonies. She has noticed some handsome old English names such as Montague, and such old English usages as "holp" for "helped," and she has heard about, though she has never yet encountered, the old English ballads they have been so charming as to preserve for folklore students at Harvard. At the same time, it sticks in her mind that a sociologist from one of the Kentucky colleges has assured her that from the sociological point of view it would be much better if they were all allowed to die of the drought. And she vacillates between an uneasy feeling that $3 can't really possibly be enough for a family of five to live on and a serious scepticism as to whether it may not be futile to try to equip them with strong gastric tubes. At any rate, she has been out in these hills all winter with no society except intermittently that of the other Red Cross worker in the same region.

The Red Cross headquarters is in a witness-room up the tobacco-juice-bespattered stairs of the court-house. Miss Dabney, when she arrives this morning, finds a good many vexatious problems to decide. The very respectful and conscientious school superintendent with his Kentucky Indian face and his gold teeth, who in this county has given Miss Dabney much better assistance than she is in the habit of getting—has them ready to put before her. In the first place, another merchant has been misbehaving: he has succeeded in inducing a considerable number of people to sign a petition asking to have their orders for supplies made out on his store. The trouble is that there are only two general stores in Clayville and that the man who got up the petition has already taken al-

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most all his trade away from the other man. It seems that he wants to monopolize the trade, in which case the other storekeeper will go bankrupt—he is on the point of bankruptcy already, and unless the Red Cross buys something from him will be a candidate for relief himself. Miss Dabney examines the petition: it is a very depressing document. Most of the signers can hardly write their names and a number of them have only made crosses. She wonders whether they know what they are doing or if they really want to ruin the storekeeper and, if so, why. Then there are the cases of people who live near the county-line and have been collecting relief on both sides. These people will have to be checked up on and assigned to one county or the other, and their relief suspended for a while as punishment. Miss Dabney goes through the applications. The superintendent explains that he has tried faithfully to keep down the number of applications granted, to absolutely authenticated needy cases. As it is, out of the twelve hundred families in the county at least eight hundred have been estimated to need help. Miss Dabney runs through the applications and reflects that, in spite of all the questions which the applicants have to answer about themselves and the pains which she tries to have taken to check up on them, it is hard to tell from the applications whether the people need relief or not. You have to take property, mortgages, debts and the number of people in the family into account. If they have livestock, the policy has been to disallow their applications, because they are supposed to be able to sell it.

A new light, however, is thrown upon this assumption by the arrival of an old man in gum-boots. This old man has been pestering the committee all morning and they want to know if Miss Dabney won't deal with him. According to the rules, he is a dubious case, but he is so persistent that it is impossible to put him off. He says he has a letter from President Hoover. The superintendent presents the old man to Miss Dabney, and he jerkily but vigorously shakes hands with her. He is tall, but bent forward from the waist; he has gray eyes, an obstinate intrusive nose, and a white beard and mustache, and he wears a long brown overcoat without any buttons. Miss Dabney notes that he is pretty clean as they go and she is struck by a resemblance to Bernard Shaw. She invites him to sit down. "You've had help already, haven't you?" she asks. "I had two dollars and a half three weeks ago," says the old man, very positively and promptly. "How many are there in your family?" asks Miss Dabney. "Four." "Who are they?" "My wife, my daughter, my daughter's boy, and myself." "Have you any debts?" "No," says the old man, "but two dollars and a half don't last very long for a family of four!" "What's your name?" Miss Dabney begins to look through the applications. "Davis." "What's your first name?" "Millard Fillmore—Millard Fillmore Davis. I guess that's a President you never have heard of, but he was thirteenth President of the United States and they named me after him!" Miss Dabney refers to the application. "But you have a cow," she says. "Can't you sell it?" "I could *give* it away," says the old man. "I don't know who I could sell it to!" "You have a letter from the President, Mr. Davis?" Miss Dabney asks after a moment's pause. "I have it right here," says Mr. Davis. "I wrote to President Hoover when I couldn't get no he'p here two weeks ago." He produces it from an inside pocket, and Miss Dabney takes it and looks at it: it proves to have been written by the head of the Kentucky branch of the Red Cross, who refers Mr. Davis to the headquarters of his local chapter. "Oh, yes," says Miss Dabney—she folds

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the letter and hands it back. He puts it away in his pocket and continues to sit, his gum-boots wide apart, his old cap held in both hands and his head thrown back and his beard stuck out as who should say, "I've got a claim and you must know it!": he meets her with his bright gray eye. "Well," says Miss Dabney, "I'll give you an order, but I don't want you to tell anybody about it—please don't tell anybody about it." "I won't tell nary a soul!" says the old man positively and promptly.

In the meantime several other applicants have gotten in, including a woman with a baby, and are sitting on a bench beside the stove; and Miss Dabney has the door locked and watched so that she can get on to the paperwork when she has disposed of them. There is an overwhelming amount of paperwork in connection with the Red Cross, and it is one of Miss Dabney's principal duties to check up on it.

When she is alone with the superintendent and his assistant, he puts it up to her whether it would be a good plan to save postage on the granted applications, which have all been put into envelopes and addressed, by simply handing them out to the people, most of whom are there at that moment milling around the court-house. Miss Dabney says yes, why not? "The trouble is," explains the superintendent, "that the ones that don't get any relief are go'n' to make an awful lot o' fuss. I think we better spend the six dollars in postage and let 'em find out after they get home." Miss Dabney says yes: no doubt that would be wiser. An emphatic knocking is heard at the door and the girl assistant is seen holding it against somebody and talking to him through the crack. It seems that it is the old man again, who wants to know if his order is ready. The girl explains that they will mail it to him.

When Miss Dabney has finished with the paperwork at about four o'clock in the afternoon, she goes out to get the bus back to Booneville. In front of the court-house, she finds the patent-medicine faker on the motor-truck still holding a large crowd. He is a big four-square upstanding man with a new straight-brimmed Stetson hat, a straight wide mouth and small greenish crafty eyes. Miss Dabney stops to listen.

"Now I don't *have* to make these lectures," says the man, pausing deliberately after every sentence to let its serious significance sink in. "When a minister comes to your church to preach a sermon, he don't *have* to preach that sermon. And I don't do this for my own good—I do it for *your* good!—You're deaf, ain't ye?" he says, turning to a man in the crowd. *"I say, you're deaf, ain't ye?*—I thought ye were by the way ye held up your hand to your ear to hear me talk. Just step up on the platform, will ye please?" He helps the man up on the truck: he is a little oldish hobo. "What's your name? *I say, what's your name? Can ye hear me now? I say, what's your name? Now I want to show ye something! Take a little of the liquid from this bottle—Dakota Jack's Cherokee Snake Oil—and rub it behind both your ears—rub it in good, like this.* Now some people [turning to the crowd] can't hear. A husband usually can't hear when his wife asks him for ten dollars. And when your mother-in-law's in the house, ye wish ye *couldn't* hear! *That's right: rub it in good—just behind the ear!* I knew an old woman who was so deaf that she hadn't heard thunder in twenty years and I gave her a little of this oil and I had her rub it on her ears and then I said to her, 'Nancy, can ye hear me now?'—and she said, 'Don't talk so loud—you'll deafen me!' *Keep rubbin' and then leave it a little while to take effect!* I met a farmer once and I

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ast him, 'Is stable manure good on potatoes?' 'Yes, if ye like it,' he says, 'but down in Oklahoma we use ham-gravy.' " This brings a big laugh at the expense of Oklahoma. "Now we're goin' to see how it works." He turns to the old bum and demands in his natural voice: "What's your name?" "Harry Hill," the old man instantly answers. "Now in the olden times they'd say that was witch-craft! But to-day we know that it's done with a medicine. You can buy it yourself for a dollar a bottle. Dakota Jack's Cherokee Snake Oil—it took me seven years to find out how this receipt was made, but finally the old Indian who put it up told me the secret on his death-bed. It's made out of sixteen different herbs, washed and powdered at my mill in Deadwood, South Dakota. There isn't any snake-oil in it—that's jest the name that the Indians give it—so ye don't need to hesitate to take it internally—it's made of clean powdered herbs.

"Now I don't know if any of ye ever wake up with a pain in the small o' your back—right here in the small o' your back! I don't know whether that's happened to any of ye. You may have had it and thought nothing of it—you may have thought it was jest a pain and would go away. But that pain will come back again and again—and there's nothing that can kill a man quicker if it's not attended to in time. That pain is called Hydronephrosis of the Kidney"— The crowd is momentarily displaced by the onrush of a runaway mule team.

Miss Dabney is horrified to observe a solemn line of men filing into the village drugstore to lay down their dollars for Dakota Jack's remedy. She reflects, as she moves on toward the bus, that it was certainly just as wise for the Red Cross to help these people with supplies rather than cash. Nevertheless, it is perfectly possible that some of those men may be spending their last dollars to cure the deafness of members of their families, and so soon land in the Red Cross's list. Miss Dabney has heard of the beneficent influence of the radio on the mountain people, but she has seen them gathered around the village store listening to Amos and Andy, and she can't help wondering whether they are really being educated. She can't help wondering whether that professor of sociology wasn't right about them after all. Nevertheless, she is there for the winter.

Brown dried-out fields and hills with badly shaved beards of corn-stubble, forlorn dried drooping Indian-pipe plantings of uncut corn—orange Nehi signs, a competitor of Coca-Cola, plastered on things along the road—"dog-run" houses with twin front doors between which the hunting-dogs used to be kept, little cabins without any basements, propped up on stone stems—red infertile soil—sheep, mules, and chickens—the streams running with muddy water for the first time since last February—little towheads and redheads in white, pink and blue of their Sunday best playing about the church and the schoolhouse—an old cement works, abandoned now, with the houses of a small company settlement attached to it, a couple of infinitesimal soft-coal mines, hardly more than little black burrows in the clay, blackened chimneys left desolately standing from fires.

The county agent stops his car just before the road crosses a creek, and he and Gillam, the head of the School Board, get out. The path, deep with mud, leads right into the wilderness and the hills. "The grocer over at Booneville found 'em," says the county agent. "He was fishin' for minnows in the creek and he happened to come across the cabin in the woods. He knew John Ingram's brother Fred. I reckon Fred's 'most as pore as John, ain't he?" "He's right pore," says

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Gillam — he speaks phlegmatically, with incredible slowness. "If it hadn't been for that rain," says the agent, "I reckon the fish would be dead in the streams like they are up in Ohio—they die and make a scum on top of the water up there, and it gives off a poisonous gas and the people get sick from breathin' it." "I hear tell," says Gillam. He is a short man with a blank expression—he is typical of the dog-run people, but there is more in his head than in his face. He has ten children and several of them have distinguished themselves by winning prizes at school. The county agent is a big-boned, blue-eyed, red-faced rustic Kentuckian, who wears spectacles and a large tweed cap pulled down over his eyes. He was born in the next county—an agent must know his locality but cannot serve in his native county.

The disused road becomes an aimless clearing through thickets, under the brow of a hacked-down stony bank with the aspect of a quarry. "The Devil must 'a' dragged his apron-strings through here!" says the agent. "I don't see what anybody would want to clear it for!" The clearing widens: like a stump in the forest, an abandoned chimney stands. The agent looks at the ground and stamps on it: "You couldn't drive a railroad spike into it," he says. "I reckon they found that out and moved the house away—it don't look like it had been burnt. That's a potato patch, ain't it? That's what it is!—somebody's planted a potato patch!" They gaze at the unpromising patch and pass on, and come out finally into a miry field along the wide slope of a hill. As they slosh with heavy shoes through the mud, they draw nearer and nearer to a log cabin, and when they are up to it at last, they look in. There is nothing inside—even half the floor is gone, and you can look down through the sleepers to the ground. "He pulled the floor up and burnt it for kindling," says Gillam with his impassive drawl. "Well," concludes the agent heartily, "he moved out of it jest in time —it was jest about to fall in on top of him!"

It turns out to be a long walk. "Did you say this was only a mile?" demands the agent—they end by having to climb the hill.

At last there looms ahead near the top a little group of shacks. A dog barks at them as they approach, but remains mysteriously invisible. They go up to a building which has smoke coming out of the chimney, a primitive log cabin without any windows and with crude scale-like shingles on the roof. The door is open, but the place is so smoky that at first they can hardly see. There are people around a fire, and a small old man who, though he hardly comes forward, seems the principal presence in the room. With watering eyes, the visitors greet him. "Well, Ingram," says the agent, "we jest come by to see how ye were gittin' along!—Ye able to keep warm this weather?" "Yes: we keep the fire lit," says the old man. "These your children?" The agent makes out children gathered around the fire. "Yes," says the old man. "You want to be careful this house don't burn down!" "We watch the fire," says the old man with simplicity and in a rather dim and feeble voice, but with a certain dignity which declines to be submissive before the benevolent bullying of the agent. "Well, you want to look out it don't catch fire some day! I saw one burn down jest last week and the people jest leaned against the fence and watched it burn." "Yes," says the old man, mildly and firmly. "I'm careful."

"How're ye off for food?" asks the agent. "Have ye got plenty of food?" "That's jest what we haint got much of," says the old man, as if with gentle hu-

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mor. He has a gentle and rather sensitive face, with very pale blue eyes and a frontiersman's drooping yellow mustache; his hair, under his limp brown hat, is long and comes down over his collar. He is small and thin and pale—so thin and pale that he seems to have undergone some kind of purification. "Well," says the agent, "how long d'ye think that what ye've got'll last ye?" "We've got 'bout two more messes o' meal—'bout half a pound o' meat—a quart o' flour." The agent looks around: the flour is hung up in a sack immediately behind his shoulder under the low eaves of the sloping roof. That side of the cabin is filled by an iron bedstead with most of the white paint scraped off, on which a mess of old quilts and mattresses is heaped. On the other side, to the left of the fire, is a little table with dishes on it and firewood under it; and to the right, a blackened kettle on a stove, a chair and two wooden boxes. This is all there is in the cabin, and there is not room for anything more.

"Did ye git it from the Red Cross?" "Yes." "Well, ye better go and git some more when this gives out, hadn't ye?" "They won't give me any more." "They won't, eh? Have ye been to 'em and asked 'em?" "I went to 'em and they wouldn't give me any more." The agent is silent a moment—then he asks: "You make baskets, don't ye?" "I haint been able to work lately—I've been sick." "What's been the matter with ye?—flu?" "I've had the fever." He is evidently not well yet—his eyes water and he coughs continually. "Have ye seen a doctor?" "No: I haint seen a doctor. I made myself some boneset tea. I take boneset for most complaints." He shows them a jar of stalks in water. "Does it he'p ye? Are ye gittin' better?"—in talking to Mr. Ingram, he speaks his language. "Yes: I feel better."

The agent looks around at the children. In the dim and smoky cabin, he is able to make out four. There are a baby, an oldish boy, evidently a cripple, crouched beside the fire with his legs folded under him, a little girl almost hidden behind the stove, and a boy of about thirteen or fourteen sitting on a wooden box in front of it. "How old's that youngest child?" asks the agent. "She was 'bout three months old when my wife died—that was 'bout three years ago." Mr. Ingram takes up the baby and holds her in his arms as they go on talking—easily, tenderly, familiarly, as women hold their children: the baby has a very dirty face. "How old's this boy?" "I doan know—I've got it down here"—he nods vaguely. "How old's the little girl?" asks the agent. "I doan know," says Mr. Ingram, without embarrassment. "This other boy is crippled, is he?" "Yes; a boy threw a rock at him when he was small and hit him in the back." The cripple, as they begin to talk about him, turns around to the fire and holds his stiff withered arm toward the blaze. The agent still gazes at the children. "How old are ye, son?" he asks the other boy, a good-looking little blond fellow. "I doan know," the boy replies in a voice distinct and surprisingly deep, which contrasts with his father's faintness. "You'd ought to find out those children's ages, Ingram, and teach 'em to 'em!" the agent remonstrates with him. "I've got it all down here," says Ingram. "I caint remember things since I've had the fever." It becomes evident that, in spite of his amiable manners, he is very dazed and vague—light-headed, the visitors suppose. They feel about him some of that unreality which people with fevers feel about themselves; but the deep voice of the boy still reverberates and disconcerts them with the presence of life. "How many kids have ye got altogether?" asked the agent. "Five." "Where's the other

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one?" "I doan know: he's gone away somewhere."

"How many times did the Red Cross he'p ye?" "They he'ped me twice." "How much did they give ye?" "Ten dollars." "Now I'm gonta ask ye a question," announces the agent emphatically, as if to impress on Mr. Ingram the seriousness of the subject he is raising. "Did ye trade off some bedclothes they gave ye?" "I traded the blankets fer a heifer. I had to sell my two cows to pay the doctor when my wife was sick and I had to sell the hawg because I couldn't feed him. I reckoned the heifer could graze this winter (God knows what on! thinks the agent)—and in the summer it'd have a calf and we could get some milk." "But it'll be nine months before it can have a calf, won't it?" "Yes," the old man assents. "An' where're ye goin' to git food when this gives out?" "I doan know," says the old man without a shadow of apprehension or complaint. "Well, you'd hadn't ought to traded that bedding—you don't want to trade anything the Red Cross gives ye! Is that why they wouldn't he'p ye any more? They found ye'd traded the bedding?" "That's what they said," says Mr. Ingram. "Well, now, you don't want to do anything like that again!" he speaks imperatively and loudly. "You needed those blankets to keep those children warm at night!" "We've got quilts and they keep us warm," says the old man, politely but with the air of one who knows his own business.

The agent looks again at the children: he is a little baffled and appalled by the Ingrams. All the time that he has been talking to their father, the children have been watching him without moving with a bright, evidently intelligent gaze. Himself with goggled eyes and thick lips, a red, blunt-nosed, salmon-shaped visage, he recognizes in these clear oval faces, paled and refined by starvation, the pure breed of that Anglo-Saxon type which, inbred in Virginia and Boston and rendered decadent, assimilated on the frontier to the hatchet profile and high cheek-bones of the Indians, still haunts the American imagination as the norm from which our race has departed, the ideal toward which it ought to tend. "You'd ought to send those children to school, Ingram," he says. "Why don't ye make 'em go to school?" "It's too fur to go and the children throw rocks at 'em." The agent has heard from the local school-teacher that the little Ingrams, during the brief period of their school-going, seemed to be unusually smart. He addresses himself again to the children. "You better move away from that stove!" he admonishes the little girl. "You'll get too hot and catch cold." The little girl makes no reply, but partly draws in her head, so that only her bright eyes and blond hair are visible over the top. After a moment the boy who spoke before makes a gesture and a sound as if to prompt his sister to do as the visitor says, but the impulse is inhibited and he falls back into sitting silent and gazing as before. "You'll have to grow up, sis," the agent persists, broadly smiling, "an' he'p your pappy to keep house!" The little girl at last suddenly smiles—the first time any of them has changed his expression—a lovely pleased and candid smile. "Yes," says the agent. "You'll have to grow up. Is the boy a he'p to you?"—he turns to Ingram. "Has he learned to do things?" "Yes: he kin can blackberries pretty good." "Well," the agent declares at last, "we'll have to be gittin' along!—I don't suppose you'll want to ask us to stay to supper!" "Won't ye stay to supper?" says the old man. "No: I don't güess you want any friends to stop and take dinner with ye to-night!" "Won't ye stay?" repeats Mr. Ingram.

As they go out, the dog barks at them

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again and this time they locate him in a box beside the door. He is black and droops a flop-eared head on paws that hang outside the box: though he still barks, he has failed in his dog's duty of flying out at strangers—he seems feeble and hopeless, hungry, too. "I feel kind o' chilly," says Ingram, as he stands outside seeing them off: he begins to cough again. "Why don't ye go and live in that house down the hill? It's a better house'n yours, even though the floor's half tore up." "That's Peter Hunter's house," says the old man. "Peter wouldn't want me to live in his house." "Now I'm goin' to talk to the Red Cross," says the agent, "and I want ye to go to them again and I think they'll he'p ye. But I don't want ye to trade anything they give ye! Now remember that: don't trade anything they give ye!" "It don't matter what kind o' trade ye make," says Ingram, who, it now appears, has misunderstood from the first the basis of the objections to his conduct. "It don't matter what kind o' trade ye make, there's always folks that'll say it was a bad trade—Gillam'll tell ye the same!" The boy has come to the door and is still guardedly peering out at the visitors with his disconcerting intelligent face. "Well," says the agent, "wrap those children up warm—and don't let 'em catch your fever!"

It is getting dark as they go back down the hill. The agent feels kind of sad. His whole county is flat on its back—half his work has been undone by the winter. He has spent years teaching the people what to raise and how to raise it and in trying to get the children educated, and now this last month the local banks have failed through the speculations of some fool gambler in Louisville and seventy-some members of the young people's club he had organized and induced to start bank accounts have lost the whole of their savings—$280,000 is a lot of money in a backwoods Kentucky county. And it needs more than Red Cross relief and farm-loans to put a community like that on its feet. The agent's relation to the Red Cross is very much like Miss Dabney's relation to the social workers in New York. He has little faith in committees: they usually try to get other people to do things.

Now he's got to see the Red Cross about Ingram and if possible get the friendly grocer to help the Ingrams out with supplies. He's got to get the cripple into an institution—his mother would never let him be sent to one, but they could probably get Ingram to give him up now. And he might get local families to take the two older children. As for Ingram, he will very possibly die, and though it's a sad thing to admit, it's probably the best thing he can do—he's such a sorry fellow. But then, what's to become of the baby? People don't want to take in babies.

He says to Gillam: "I don't think that story can be true that those children were eating their fingers from hunger." "I don't see how it's possible," drawls Gillam. "They wouldn't eat their fingers," continues the agent. "I couldn't see any signs of it—I tried to make the little girl come out from behind the stove so that I could see."

"This country is going wild," he says presently. "It's been going wild since the War. The people don't go to church any more—they listen to sermons on the radio. The highways have changed life altogether. The people used to help each other out, but they don't care about each other now any more than if they was stock"—"Down where I was born in Tennessee," says Gillam, "if a farmer's crop failed, a neighbor would lend him corn. They never gave each other notes—he'd pay it back the next year." "Nowadays," declares the agent, "people would shoot ye for a dollar! They don't mean to hurt ye but they want the money."

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He-Rain

By HOLGER CAHILL

FREMONT said they'd be jake if they could go along with the Plaza outfit. The four of them, Fremont, Shuster, Ellis, and the old man, were setting out that evening for the snake-dance. It was a tough trip this time of the year on desert roads that washed right out from under you if a rain-storm came. Most of the Santa Fe crowd had started two days before. They were taking no chances.

Fremont and his crowd had made up their minds to go at the last minute. They were tickled with the idea of going along with those fourteen-karat tourists from the Plaza Hotel. There'd be some pretty dangerous roads to travel once they hit the Navajo reservation. It wasn't such a hot idea to go out there in a lonely tin lizzie with no service station within a hundred miles. With the Plaza outfit going along everything would be jake.

The Plaza outfit was starting out at midnight in three powerful cars. They carried camp cots and folding-chairs and chicken dinners for the whole crew. They even had hot and cold running water in the cars, Fremont said. Sure they did. If they wanted hot water the chauffeurs could take it out of the radiator.

Fremont and his crowd didn't know anybody in the Plaza outfit, but that didn't make any difference. On a trip like that people helped each other and that was all there was to it.

Fremont was sure they'd be all right. Shuster saw it the way Fremont did and so did the old man. The Plaza outfit would go anywhere they started to go, the old man said. They had the money and nothing could stop you if you had money. It was their cue to stick to the Plaza outfit.

"We'll stick to them like a brother," said Fremont. "It won't be very healthy for us out there on our lonesome if we get hit with a rain-storm."

"What's the idea of all the talk about rain?" Ellis said. "The way it looks we'll be more likely to die of thirst."

"You ain't been long in the country, old man," Fremont said.

Ellis couldn't get the idea of being so nervous about rain. In the stores around the Plaza everybody was talking about the dry summer. Out in the pueblos the Indian rain-dancers were busy doing their stuff. Even some of the Mexican farmers out at Agua Fria had been seen out on the hills making dance motions to bring down rain. The farmers were good church members but it was queer the way they tried to make themselves right with the Indian gods. Poor devils, they had a tough time of it in a dry year and thought they might as well stand in with any kind of a god that was around.

The town was about its evening affairs as they drove down the Camino. Horses in a corral were whinnying. A man tossed them forkfuls of hay. His wife stood beside him nursing a naked child. A midwife was hurrying to the home of Vicente Fernandez. A pueblo dog sniffed at a gnawed bone by the roadside. Then the town was gone and they were on the road, four hundred miles to go.

Fremont was driving. Ellis sat in the front seat with him. In the back seat were Shuster and the old man. The old man was a character. He had worked in

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the Santa Fe post-office for twenty-five years. In vacation time he usually went back to civilization. What he meant by civilization was Kansas City and St. Louis, where he could have the kind of a good time you get only in big cities. This was the first time in twenty-five years that he had weakened and gone into the Indian country. He certainly was loyal to civilization. The old man was a thrifty cuss, but when he was on vacation he was a real sport. He smoked cigars all the time.

It was getting dark. Ellis could see the red tip of the old man's cigar reflected in the wind-shield. They went past the lonely peaks of the Cerillos, dropped down the fold in the mountain plain and out on the Albuquerque road. The country was like a dust-bin. Hot winds had been blowing across a thousand miles of desert for more than six weeks, and not a drop of rain.

"They sure need rain-makers in this country," Ellis said.

"The Indians have a lot of them," Fremont said.

"They'd better try a few barrels of gunpowder."

"Maybe so, but the Indians put their bets on the snake-dance."

There was no moon. Heat-lightning behind the Sandia mountains made the hills and the mesas come up like flat clouds and drop back into the night again. Ellis tried to see the country when the lightning flashed. It was like the bottom of a sea that had dried up, but if there ever was a sea here it must have been a long time ago. There were buried cities all over the tops of the mesas, thousands of them. A professor up at the Plaza Hotel said there were more buried cities in New Mexico than in all Europe. The Indians had been here a good long time.

After they passed Albuquerque the road was bad. It got sandier and sandier and there were a lot of detours. At midnight they were all tired. Fremont turned the car off the road near a big horse corral and drove up a flat-topped hill. They unstrapped their kit-bags from the running-board and threw them on the ground. Fremont, Ellis, and Shuster slept in one set of blankets like spoons in a bureau drawer. The old man had a kit of his own. It gave the fellows a good laugh to see him. He had a rubber mattress that he blew up, and he was as dainty as a schoolgirl about getting his bed all set. When he blew up the mattress he had to take the cigar out of his face, but as soon as he was through he started it going again.

Ellis and the old man gathered pieces of wood around the corral. Shuster was a regular gypsy at making a camp-fire. He built a fire between two stones, then he set a can filled with water and coffee on the stones. The four of them sat around the fire and passed around a blazing stick to light their cigarettes. You had to be careful about matches on a trip like that. They had been sitting at the fire only a few minutes when they noticed a light weaving circles around the corral.

"It's a headlight," Fremont said. "Somebody's driving around the corral."

The headlight made a few circles and stopped. Fremont and Ellis got up and walked toward the corral. A big car was standing there. The driver got out of the car and came toward them.

"Where's the Gallup road?" the driver asked.

"You're on it," Fremont said.

The driver turned back to the people in the car. "Guess these men are lost as much as we are," he said.

"You're on the Gallup road, I tell you," Fremont said.

"I never saw no fence like this on the Gallup road," the driver said. "I can't make out the landmarks here."

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That gave Fremont a good laugh. "You've been driving around a big hoss corral. This ain't any fence."

The driver had to laugh at that himself. The people in the car didn't think it was so funny.

It turned out to be the first car of the Plaza outfit. The driver told Ellis they had decided to start earlier so they could make Gallup that night. The people got out of the car to stretch their legs. There was an old chap with his wife and two daughters and a couple of young fellows. The driver whispered to Ellis that the old bird was a railroad president or something. It made Ellis feel self-conscious the way the old bird gave them the once over, but Fremont was a sociable guy and he invited them all over to warm themselves at the fire while they waited for their other cars. Fremont and Shuster and Ellis were wearing overalls and red bandannas tied around their necks. The old man was wearing corduroy pants and a gray shirt. They looked like a gang of section-hands out of a job. The railroad president didn't say anything when Fremont invited him over to the fire. He just came over. After he had been standing at the fire for a while he fished up something that looked like a smile.

"On your way to the snake-dance?" he said.

"Yes," said Fremont. "We started this evening from Santa Fe."

"I see," the old bird said.

"We're mighty glad so many of us are going together," Fremont said. "It's a dangerous trip if it happens to rain."

"So I hear," the old bird said.

"It's best to go out there in a crowd," Fremont said. "Then we can help each other."

The old bird didn't say anything. Shuster had the coffee made. He poured it into tin cups and offered it around. The old bird and his crowd didn't care for any. The party wasn't much of a success. Fremont wanted to talk to them, but he didn't know what to say. They were a new kind of animal to him.

"I see lights on the road," the driver said. "I think it's our cars."

The driver ran down to the road and hailed the cars as they came up to the corral. They were the Plaza cars all right. The old bird and his party went back to their car.

"See you on the road to-morrow," Fremont said.

"Glad to see you," the old bird said.

"The hell he'll be glad," said Fremont after the cars had left. "He'll pass us up the way one of his pay-cars passes up a tramp."

The old man was lying on his air mattress with the red tip of his cigar sticking up into the sky. Fremont and Shuster were snoring as soon as they hit the blankets. Ellis slept badly. Something the professor down at the Plaza Hotel had said about the snake-dance kept running through his head. It was like a solemn high mass for rain, the professor said. When the snake priests went down into their kivas, they prayed to the great snake mother under the earth and asked her to send rain. They were in their kivas now. Day after to-morrow they would dance. The air was filled with the sound of snake rattles, like thunder, calling for rain. Look out for cloudbursts in the mountains. The arroyos would be roaring with water. The roads would be terrible. They would have to keep pushing like hell. Ellis dreamed that he was having a hot argument with some one about it. Then Fremont was shaking him.

Dawn had chilled the night blue. They were in a valley. Flat-topped mesas, like big red steamboats, drove their sandstone prows into the valley. Ellis had never seen this part of the country before. It was too much for him.

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There was nothing that his mind could do with it. It numbed him. He had to submit to it, take it on the button and let it go at that. The old man was letting the air out of his mattress. Ellis jumped up shivering. The sun hadn't come up yet.

"We've got to push on to Gallup before breakfast," Fremont said. "We'll have to manœuvre to get ahead of that Plaza outfit. Then if we get stuck in the mud they'll have to pull us out just to get us out of their way."

It was seventy-five miles to Gallup. They made it in two hours and a half. Near the railroad-station in Gallup the Plaza cars were standing. Fremont and his crowd went into the station washroom to freshen themselves up a bit. At eight o'clock they went into the lunchroom for breakfast. There were a lot of tourist trains coming in and it took them a long time to get served. When they came out again the Plaza cars were gone.

"They put one over on us that time," Fremont said, "but I'll catch them out in the Navajo reservation."

Fremont gave her the gun and before they were out of town the speedometer was climbing up to fifty. A few miles west of Gallup the going was bad. The road was no more than a wheel rut. It had been marked lately by heavy tires. The road changed all the time. West of Gallup they left the red mesa country. Sometimes they crawled over sand-hills, then it was clay, and again it was hillsides covered with tough scrub-oak where the wheel ruts dodged in and out between tree roots. The speedometer dropped to six miles an hour in the bad spots. On level stretches it climbed no higher than fifteen. Fremont had a job on his hands guiding the car in and out between the stunted trees and over the sand-hills. They were in Navajo country. Here and there they could see the mud and timber hogans of the Navajos. They were empty. The Navajos were out with their sheep and cattle this time of the year and lived in the open. Once they saw a horseman driving a herd of cattle, but while they were looking he disappeared into a deep arroyo, cattle and all.

The country spread out before them. Sage and desert grass ran in gray waves to where the Hopi mesas stood like stone clouds on the horizon. Out there was the snake-dance country. The air was dry and clear. You could see a hundred miles ahead.

They stopped for lunch at a Navajo trading-post near Steamboat Canyon. The post was run by a man named Juan Schmidt, who was part Spanish and part Pennsylvania Dutch. He and his father had been trading here with the Navajos for fifty years. There were a lot of Navajos standing around in velvet shirts, with silver belts, and bracelets and earrings set with turquoise.

The sight of so many Navajos got the old man excited. He went into the trading-post store and bought himself a bandanna handkerchief and a lot of cheap jewelry made in New York. When Juan Schmidt saw the old man dolled up with bracelets and rings and a red bandanna around his neck he laughed so hard he felt ashamed of himself. Then to make himself right he invited the old man and the gang of them to lunch. Juan Schmidt was tickled to have visitors. He wanted to hear the latest gossip from Santa Fe and Albuquerque. When he had used up that subject he asked Ellis where he came from.

"From the East," Ellis said.

"I thought you was a foreigner," said Juan Schmidt.

"That puts Ellis where he belongs," said Fremont.

"I mean a foreigner in this neck of the woods," said Juan Schmidt.

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"I guess we're all foreigners in this neck of the woods," said Ellis.

"Sure," said Juan Schmidt. "We all come from somewhere else. If it comes right down to it, who ain't a foreigner? The Hopis chase somebody else out and settle here. Then the Navajos come and chase the Hopis up onto the mesas. The Spaniards come in and boss the Navajos. And then Uncle Sam comes in and tells the Spaniards where to get off."

"But the Hopi came first."

"They sure did," said Juan Schmidt. "They're *Mayflower* stock in these parts. It's funny the way they hang onto this desert country. They're stickers. You've got to say that for them. They're the only Indians I know about that stick to their own religion. Most Indians make a pass at taking the white man's religion. Not the Hopis. You'll see their religion at the snake-dance to-morrow."

"Rain prayer, isn't it?" asked the old man.

"Yep. Rain prayer. That's about all the Hopis ever pray for."

"I guess they must stage their dance at the time of the year when they expect rain," said Ellis.

"They stage it when they need it most," said Juan Schmidt.

"And once in a while they get it," said Ellis.

"Most of the time they get it."

"Do you mean to say they can get rain when they want it?" said Ellis.

"I don't mean to say anything except that most of the time they get it," said Juan Schmidt. "There's a lot of funny things about the Hopis, and that's one of them."

Ellis looked up at the sky. There was not a cloud. It was turquoise-clear from rim to rim.

"They'll have to do some tall dancing to get rain out of that sky," Ellis said.

"They'll do it without half trying," said Juan Schmidt.

"What do you mean?"

"It's going to rain this afternoon."

"What makes you think so?"

"I don't think so. It's what I'm telling you. The snake priests know when to dance."

The Navajo girl who worked for Schmidt was clearing away the dishes. They sat around and talked a little while longer and then Fremont wondered if they hadn't better start pretty soon. The others agreed they ought to start. They thanked Juan Schmidt for the lunch and said good-by to him.

"He's full of boloney," said Shuster when they got back to the car. "There's no rain in that sky."

Fremont nosed the car into Steamboat Canyon. The country was as dry as excelsior. The wheels kicked up the sand against the body of the car. Fremont ran the speedometer up to thirty and held it there until they hit the other side of the canyon where the road was bad again. They had cut another twenty miles off the distance and still there wasn't a cloud in the sky.

"That Schmidt guy sure talked out of his turn that time," said Shuster.

"There isn't a cloud the size of a post-age-stamp," said Ellis.

"She's a lot grayer," said Fremont.

There wasn't any more turquoise in the sky. It was gray like a washed-out Navajo blanket but still there were no clouds. Everybody felt that was something. Fremont kept pushing the lizzie fast as she would go over the road-ruts filled with tree stumps and rocks. The sky grayed and thickened. Wisps of cloud floated up from the horizon and gathered overhead. There were rain-clouds over the Hopi country. The wind-shield began to mist up. Quietly, so you could hardly notice it, the rain came. It came down thin as gauze.

"It's what the Indians call a she-rain," said Fremont.

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The road ahead turned darker and glistened a little. The car began to skid. They were in clay country again.

The rain was coming down hard now. Soon there would be floods coming down from the mountains. It was the kind of rain that all the Indian rain prayers asked for, a regular he-rain. The mountains were twenty miles away. Half an hour ago they looked as if you could touch them just by stretching out your arm. Now they weren't there at all. The road wound around like a snake, trying to dodge the arroyos, but it was no use. Before they had gone three miles they came to an arroyo they had to cross. The water was nearly three feet deep and running like an express-train. There must have been heavy rain up in the mountains.

The road across the arroyo was deeply rutted and it was slippery. They couldn't make it without skid-chains. All four of them got out. They jacked the wheels up one by one, cleaned the mud off and put on the chains. Then Fremont had a try at it, with the three others pushing. They got across by main strength and awkwardness.

"The chains don't mean a thing in a place like that," said Fremont. "That mud is like axle grease."

They started again. The going was a little better. The road was sandier now and Fremont was able to push the speedometer up to fifteen miles. The rain was slowing down. The crowd in the car began to feel cheerful again.

"These arroyos aren't so bad," Ellis said.

A few minutes later he was sorry he had said it. They had just started down a hill. At the bottom was an arroyo they couldn't cross. They didn't have to look more than once to see that, for right there was the whole Plaza outfit. There was the old bird and his family and the rest of the tourists sitting in their cars looking kind of blue, as if they felt that some one had done them dirt.

Fremont got out of the car and walked over to the arroyo. He tried the water with the shovel. It was nearly four feet deep. They couldn't take a chance on crossing until the water got lower. That might not be long unless it began to rain hard again. In the west the sun was trying to break through. Fremont looked over the arroyo crossing. The road curved around the side of a hill. To the right of the road was the steep hill bank, to the left was a drop of three or four feet where the waters of the arroyo went over like a baby Niagara. The water was coming down strong from the mountains and it might easily push a car over that drop.

"We'll have to dig the road wider at the right," Fremont said to one of the Plaza drivers. "It won't take much to sweep a car over that waterfall."

"We can't cross until the water has gone," said the driver.

"That won't be to-day," Fremont said. "We'll have to risk it when she goes down a little. How many shovels have you got? There's only one in our car."

The Plaza drivers got a gang of shovels out of their cars. Ellis, Shuster, the old man, and two of the Plaza drivers began digging away at the road bank. The rain had stopped. The sun was shining as if there had never been a rain. The tourists came out of their cars and stepped warily out on the sandy road. They were afraid of getting their shoes dirty.

There were streaks of grass in the sandy valley. Cattle were grazing down there. The grass was amazingly green after the rain. Four or five Navajo cowboys came riding up. They were big fellows, dark as gypsies, with bits of unpolished turquoise in their ears. They laughed and said things to each other and showed their teeth. One of them

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tried out some English on the railroad president. No good, he said, pointing to the cars. No good horse. Indian make rain. Big snake make rain. Indian eat snake. The Navajo showed how it was done, taking a coil of his lariat between his teeth. All the Navajos laughed. Sure, the Navajo said, Indian eat snake. The Navajos sat on their horses and laughed.

Fremont savvied a little of their lingo. He went over to them and offered them cigarettes. That made a great hit with them. They took the cigarettes and said O. K. That was the one word of English they all seemed to know. Fremont brought a couple of shovels over to them and got them to ride across the arroyo and begin digging on the other side. They were good-natured fellows and willing to help. The Plaza drivers were putting on their skid-chains. The road passage had been widened two feet on the near side of the arroyo. Shuster and Ellis, who were soaked to the skin anyway, waded across and began digging with the Navajos on the other side. The water was going down slowly. It was now about three feet deep.

"I think we can make it now," said Fremont.

"I'd rather it was you than me that tried it," said one of the Plaza drivers.

Fremont got into the car and started the engine going. He put her in second and started the car for the water. The crowd was nervous. Shuster, Ellis, and the old man stood on the bank of the arroyo ready to jump in and push.

"Get up some speed there!" yelled one of the Plaza drivers.

Fremont shook his head. He kept her in second and nosed her slowly into the water. The water came up over the running-board, almost to the top of the mud-guards.

"His engine won't last long in there," said one of the Plaza drivers.

The force of the stream slewed the car to the left and swung her toward the waterfall, but Fremont got her through the arroyo and set the front wheels on the other bank.

The back wheels churned the water. The car began to slip down the bank again, swinging farther toward the waterfall. Without a word Shuster, Ellis, and the old man jumped into the water and put their shoulders to the car. They held her.

"Throw him a cable and pull him back!" yelled the railroad president. "He's going over the rocks."

"He'll go over the rocks sure if we try to pull him back," said one of the Plaza drivers.

The Navajos jumped into the water and put their weight behind the car. The front wheels came out of the water again, but there the car stuck. The crowd on the bank were nervous as cats. If Fremont couldn't make it, none of the cars could make it until the water went down, and that might not be for hours. The back wheels churned the water, but the car wouldn't move. Two of the Navajos went over to their horses and took their lariats from the saddle-horns. They tied the lariats to the fender of the car. Then they mounted and hitched the lariats around the saddle-horns. They spurred their horses. The lariats tightened but still the car stuck.

"We're not pulling together, fellows," Fremont said.

"Come on! All together."

"One! Two! Heave!"

Slowly, inch by inch, they got the car up the bank. The back wheels came out of the water. The chains bit into the clay. The car came up over the bank. Ellis, Shuster, the old man, and the Navajos came up with her. They were soaked to the waist. Their shoes squirted water as they walked.

The driver of the first Plaza car was tuning up to cross the arroyo. He backed

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off and came for the water with a rush, but all he did was to make a big splash and stick there. He couldn't get the heavy car out of the water.

"Keep her going," Fremont yelled.

Ellis took the cable of Fremont's car and fastened it to the fender of the Plaza car. The water came up almost to his waist as he stooped down to fasten the cable. When he had it fastened Fremont started his car. The Plaza car came out of the arroyo easily.

The driver was tickled. "We've got her licked," he said to Ellis. "I'm much obliged to you fellows."

He got his steel cable ready and signalled to the other drivers to come across. Ellis, Shuster, and the old man took off their shoes and socks and wrung some of the water out of their clothes while the Plaza cars were being pulled across. When all the cars were over the arroyo Fremont took up a collection for the Navajos. They liked the silver money all right, but what they liked most was the cigarettes Fremont gave them. They said O. K. and fingered the silver as if they were figuring out how to work it over into jewelry.

It was five o'clock when they got going again. Two Plaza cars headed the procession. Then came Fremont and behind him the other Plaza car. The Navajos rode along with them for a mile or two, offering to race the cars. On that muddy road the cars didn't have a chance with the ponies. The Navajos thought it was a good joke. They waved their hats and rode off, their heavy chaps flapping in the wind like clipped wings.

At six o'clock they came to Platt's Canyon. There was a gas-station in the canyon. They filled their gas-tanks, looked after the tires, and had a bite to eat in the Platt's Canyon store. The tourist crowd had sandwiches, and hot coffee in thermos bottles. When they started out again Fremont was second in the procession.

"They can't pass us now if we get stuck," Ellis said.

"They don't want to pass us," said Fremont.

"I should say not. After the way we pulled 'em out of that arroyo," said the old man.

The lead driver of the Plaza outfit knew the road like a book and he kept up a good speed through the sand and slippery clay and over hillsides sharp with rock ridges. It was hard going. At nine o'clock they passed the first of the Hopi mesas. It was sandy around there. Fruit-trees stood up from the sand-hills at the base of the rock and there were rows of corn running out into the yellow desert.

"Look out for quicksands here," Fremont said. "This is the trickiest part of the country."

At ten o'clock they had thirty miles to go and every foot of the road dangerous. They had to get to the snake-dance pueblo that night. The first ceremony of the snake-dance began at dawn, and in many ways it was the finest part of the whole thing. Runners came in from the desert plantations bringing the first green stalks of corn. The women went out to meet them at the brow of the mesa and fought to get the corn-stalks. There was some kind of a mating ceremony connected with that. You couldn't tell. It was hard to get to the bottom of these Indian ceremonies. They liked to fool you. They were like children, full of tall stories about their rituals. Nobody ought to miss that dawn ceremony. They were some runners, those Hopis, sprinting miles from the desert and up the face of the mesa, a thousand feet high, carrying stalks of corn in their arms. It was something to see that race at dawn with the green corn.

A little after ten o'clock they came to

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a fork in the road. The first Plaza car took the road to the right. Fremont followed. The road went down a shallow bank. As Fremont got down the bank he saw the second Plaza car take the road to the left. The first car stopped. The drivers yelled something to each other. The driver of the first car got out and ran back.

"What's up?" Fremont asked him.

"We took the wrong turn," he said.

The two Plaza cars went down the road to the left. The driver of the first car swung around and tried to get up the bank to follow them. He tried a couple of times but couldn't make it. Then the last Plaza car gave him a tow with the cable and he got the car up on the road. Fremont was trying to back. His rear wheels tore into the sandy bank but the car refused to move. There was nothing for him to do but to drive on and try to get on the road the way the Plaza car had done it. The Plaza cars were half a mile down the road, going slow.

"I think there's some one stuck down there," Ellis said.

"I saw a man running after the Plaza cars as they drove off," the old man said.

"I saw him too," Shuster said. "Looked like an Indian."

"Guess he was looking for help."

"Poor devil. He's probably sunk out of sight."

"Say," said Fremont, "was that a stunt the Plaza crowd pulled to get us out of their line?"

"Looks like it to me," said Ellis.

"I'll bet they figured out that stunt down at Platt's Canyon. I wondered why they manœuvred us into the second place in their line."

"Do you think they planned it?"

"Sure thing. The driver of their second car pulled to one side and waited until we came out from the filling station. Then he fell in behind us."

"The damn skunks. After the way we pulled them out of that arroyo," the old man said.

By this time the Indian who was stuck down the road had stopped following the Plaza cars and come back to them. Behind him came an Indian girl of twelve or fourteen. They had the broad, powerful faces of the Pueblos, like faces on Peruvian jugs. The way she was dressed the girl had probably been in one of the Indian schools.

The Indian made a sign with his hands as if he were swinging a shovel.

"My fader he ask for shovel," the girl said.

"We've got one small one in the car," Fremont said. "It's too bad those fellows ahead didn't stop. They've got a flock of shovels."

"Dey in hurry," said the Hopi girl.

"Well, we'll try to fix you up," said Fremont. "But there ain't much use trying to dig yourself out of a quicksand."

"No quicksand," said the Hopi girl.

"Then how did you get stuck?"

"In rain," said the Hopi girl.

Fremont drove down to where the Hopi's car was. He got out and tried the ground with the shovel. It seemed firm enough, but just to make sure the car wouldn't sink they cut a lot of sagebrush and made a kind of raft for the car to ride on. The Hopi girl tried to explain to them how their car got stuck.

"Rain make big water here," she said, pointing to the arroyo.

Fremont looked the place over. The Hopi must have got stuck in the middle of the arroyo while the water was running strong. Fremont figured the best way would be to jack the car up out of the mud. He picked up a couple of rocks and put them down in front of the car as a fulcrum. Then Fremont, the old man, and the Indian got on the end of a crowbar. The car came up a little.

"That's the ticket," said Fremont.

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"Now you fellows pile brush under the wheels when we jack her up."

Ellis and Shuster rammed sage-brush under the wheels. They inched the front wheels out of the mud, then the back wheels, and made a road of brush to the arroyo bank. It was muddy work. Shuster and Ellis had to crawl on all fours to get the brush under the wheels. The others lay flat in the mud as they came down on the crowbar. Once or twice the bar slipped on the stones and the three of them came down head first. They were mud to the eyes. When they got the car up Fremont attached his cable to it. Then they started both engines and hauled the Hopi's flivver out of the mud nice as you please.

"Now," said Fremont, "we'd better get our car on the road."

"My fader he will help you," said the Hopi girl.

"O. K.," said Fremont.

"Where you go?" asked the Hopi girl.

"Snake-dance pueblo," said Fremont.

"This way," said the Hopi girl, pointing along the road to the right.

"Are you sure?"

"Sure. My fader he live dere."

"Then what do you suppose that crowd took the other road for?"

"I t'ink dey goofy," said the Hopi girl.

The Indian school certainly had done something for that girl. She told Ellis that both the roads led to the snake-dance pueblo, but that on the one to the left a bridge had been washed out about twenty miles farther on. The road to the right was fine. That was why she and her father had run after the Plaza tourists. They were trying to tell them. The Hopi nodded. There had been big rain over the snake-dance pueblo, a regular he-rain. The bridge had been washed out. The Plaza tourists would have to come back to this road. They wouldn't reach the snake-dance pueblo until tomorrow.

"They'll miss the dawn ceremony," Fremont said, "but they'll still have their chicken dinners."

"And their hot and cold running water," said Ellis.

"Too bad about them," said the old man with a grin.

"Well, nobody can say they didn't try to get there," said Fremont.

The importance of the Narrative contest becomes increasingly pronounced as the manuscripts are read. Far from being mere sociological pictures of America, these first-hand experiences reveal the many-sided and colorful life of our country. In forthcoming numbers will appear such narratives as "Fragments from Alluvia," by E. P. O'Donnell (tales of the Cajun Country of Louisiana); "Diving for Abalones," by Anthony Autumn; "Hills of Home," by Mary Hesse Hartwick (homesteading in Montana), and "Old Billy Hell," by Daniel M. Garrison (the pipe-line workers of Oklahoma).

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Government Rides the Railroads

By PAUL SHOUP

Mr. Shoup, president of the Southern Pacific System, presents the difficulties of the railroads under governmental regulation. Discussing the competition of motor-busses, water transportation, and aviation, he draws an analogy of what would happen if the farm were under the same paternal care and makes out an interesting and very readable case for a reconsideration of the transportation problem.

Two great business activities—farming and railroading—were established at the same time in the western region of our country by the aid of the government.

One of these activities, that of railroading, before a great while received the further beneficent consideration of the government in a constantly increasing system of regulation and control. During the Great War it included operation. The other, farming, was largely independent of this beneficence except as it received encouragement and protection to increase the quality and quantity of the product. The national and State departments of agriculture and many State agricultural colleges have been active in this work. In reclamation and irrigation projects large investments were made to be returned by landowners.

With the Great War came a change. It marked the beginning of a new era of government activity in greater aid to the farmer through financial help, first, by the medium of public or semi-public banks and associations, and then, in 1929, with a direct hand in price control by the use of government money. To receive this latter aid farmers had to associate themselves in an organized way; not through the process of individual choosing as partners are ordinarily selected, but necessarily according to the nature of the product.

II

It is now the year 1945.

The government has absolute control over prices of farm products. The farmer may not, without approval of the government bureau, borrow money for a period longer than two years. In fact, he can't do anything about the finances of his farm without governmental consent. He is instructed by the government in uniform accounting and checked up periodically by government accountants as to every penny he takes in or pays out. If he hasn't done this properly, he is subject to indictment, perhaps fine, and possibly imprisonment. The government has decided that the farmer may have a fair return and no more on his investment. So, again, mostly at the farmer's expense, it is arranged to determine the value of his property from year to year

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so that the fair return may be estimated. It is true that after twenty years of this work involving expenses running into hundreds of millions of dollars, no conclusion has been reached as to the value of any given farm at any given time.

However, because of the difficulty in ascertaining a fair return, the figure of 5¾ per cent per annum has been decided upon as a fair figure. It is also established that if a farmer gets more than 6 per cent return upon his investment, half of the excess will go to the government to be used to aid needy farmers, and the other half will be impounded for the ultimate benefit of the owner of the farm.

In its effort to help the farmer the government also undertakes to teach him bigger and better farming by going into the farming business itself through subsidies and by direct operations. It subsidizes farming of poor lands which cannot be operated without a loss, and, secondly, it becomes a farmer on a considerable scale. Laws are also passed so that farmers in most cases can now make purchases only after competitive bidding, whether for farm machinery, seed, automobiles, lightning-rods, fence wire, or live stock.

The government is concerned about the farmer's equipment and inspects it carefully. The laborer on the farm has also received government co-operation. He is told how many hours a day he may work and the farmer must enter into an agreement about working conditions. If they cannot agree, the government will under the law dispose of the dispute by mediation or arbitration.

The farmer is required to give rights of way at nominal prices through his farm for highways, and then by assessments pay a large share of the highway construction. He also pays half of the bill for the elimination of grade crossings on his property so that motor vehicles may pass through at their current speed of one hundred miles per hour.

And there are many interesting reports for him to fill out. The present total is 347 a year, but it is hoped in time to have sufficient additional data so that everybody who wishes will have a complete idea of farm operations.

Of course, no money is loaned to farmers any more. Through co-operation and consolidation the government has re-collected the monies heretofore loaned. Farm aid now is almost altogether a matter of government control and regulation aided by States, cities, and municipalities in that direction. Where aid was once extended by the government, the farmer still recognizes the obligation by reducing prices for government purchases, as prescribed by law.

Minor results of co-operation have been quite beneficial. The government inspectors pass upon the water used for drinking and culinary purposes on the farm, analyzing it from time to time. The farmhouse dining-rooms are heated and ventilated according to rules laid down by the government bureau.

State governments have been very helpful in the direction of additional control and direction. It is regrettable that so many of their activities administered by their public commissions duplicate the national work, but there are many matters immediately at hand where the farmer needs help in directing his affairs, and Washington is a long way off.

But notwithstanding all these great and well-meant activities, there yet seems to be some doubt as to the future of farming, and many of our most thoughtful and progressive people who know nothing about farming are inclined to the view that the government should take over their operations as a part of its own activity. Latest investi-

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gations indicate that the farmer is now receiving upon the published value of his farm properties an average return of of a little over 4 per cent, and because of the improvements he has to make, largely at the discretion of the government, he is able to put into his pocket for his own use only about 3 per cent per annum. This low rate of return, however, should be an incentive to the farmer to strive for greater efficiency.

Strangely enough, the farmer is now having some difficulty in borrowing additional money to carry out new ideas. He has already given a first mortgage on everything he possesses, and in some instances a second mortgage. The cooperatives and consolidated farms have also issued common and preferred stock, but all of these blankets do not keep him warm financially. He has not been able, like other industries employing private capital, to retire any substantial part of his capital through earnings.

III

The foregoing, you say, is a fanciful statement? Not at all.

In this statement the farm is merely substituted for the railroad with the government control and regulations the railroads have in this year 1931. The railroad stockholder received 3.3 per cent in dividends on the value of his property after deducting debts in the good year 1929.

Both the farming and railroading industries represent investment of private capital. If they need more money they go to a common market in competition with other industries.

The farms are operated directly by their owners or by tenants. Farms usually are of a size that permit of individual control. The farmer himself is one of the working staff ordinarily.

The railroads, on the other hand, represent principally aggregations of small savings. Nearly all of the owners are interested in the railroads, not as operators but as investors. Except for a relatively small number of stockholders in the railroads having large interests, the average value of the stock of the great majority does not differ materially from the average value of the farm. According to values furnished by the farmers to the census bureau in 1925, the average holding is worth about $8,000, subject, of course, to debt deductions. The number of farms was 5,775,000. A study made of several thousand farms a few years ago shows the return to be 5.1 per cent annually on fixed assets and about 22 per cent on working assets. The number of employees other than owners on the farm, determined on basis of a year's work, I have not been able to ascertain. It has greatly decreased in ten years, due to added mechanical facilities.

Interstate Commerce Commission's figures for 1929 give the number of railroad stockholders as 806,000. This figure will be increased materially by the stockholders of the electric railways and by an allowance for the great increase in the last two years in direct ownerships and those which are grouped in investment associations and the like. The total number is unquestionably in excess of a million; and another million people are directly interested as bond and note holders of the railroads. A great many million more are concerned with the ownership of railroad securities by various trusteeships, including savings-banks and insurance companies.

The earnings as measured by the investment account of the steam roads after deduction of debts was 4.84 per cent in 1929. In the year of depression just closed this figure was reduced materially.

The total value of the farms as estimated by their owners in 1925, the latest

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figures available, was $49,468,000,000 as compared with the present-day value of about $32,000,000,000 of steam and electric railroads.

These figures illustrate the fact that the savings of the American people are very largely invested in both industries with modest individual holdings. The farmer on his own ground and operating his own property, except as it is leased, has been more aggressive than the railroad owner in pointing out the economic inequality under which he labors and the lack of fair return for his effort. The difference in action is natural, since the vast majority of the railroads' owners are not in contact with the problems of their business, and are investors and not operators. But they are showing signs now of being aroused. They are taking an interest in the difficulties that confront railroading. It is not likely that these millions whose interests are at stake will forever remain inarticulate.

IV

The railroads are not only owned by the public but their expenditures are more widely and more evenly distributed over the country than those of any other industry. During the last nine years they have spent a billion dollars more, making no deduction for dividends to stockholders, than they have taken in. This is because they have added $6,855,000,000 to their investments in steam-lines to meet the public need and to secure efficiency and economy in operation.

A railroad is never finished. In addition to the constant improvements in the way of locomotives of greater power, cars more durable and with greater capacity, heavier rail, stronger bridges, ties of longer life, increased ballast, all in the interest of greater capacity, safety, and economy, there is the necessity for expansion. This includes extensions, new terminals and additions to old terminals, spur tracks, second, third, and fourth tracks, these to serve the purposes named and in addition to develop business or care for business growing along existing lines. Probably, aside from real estate, the whole railroad structure, quantitatively measured, has to be replaced every twenty years, or twenty-five years at the outside.

In the last ten years, largely because it has been found possible to have the perishable products of all sections of the country seek a market in all other sections of the country, the freight-traffic service of the railroads has been called upon for a vast improvement; so that to-day the perishable trains are operated on as exact schedules as the passenger-trains with the obligation everywhere not to miss that day's market which is the objective under the schedule, even though the movement be from the Pacific coast to the Atlantic.

Now these railroads, representing the savings of millions of our people, regulated by the government far beyond the regulation of any other enterprise supported by private capital, giving a service superior to that of any prior time in their history, and in that service meeting public demand substantially without complaint, face a very real crisis—perhaps involving as important problems as those the railroads faced at the termination of government operation in 1920. Because of vital public interest in service as well as the element of justice to the owners of the railroads, the Railway Transportation Act of 1920 was enacted when the railroads were restored to their owners.

The owners and managements have met the obligation placed upon them at that time to render an efficient service and to expand it to meet the public needs. The government has been un-

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able to meet the obligation it assumed to secure a fair return to the owners of these railroads upon the capital invested.

This fair return was fixed finally by the Interstate Commerce Commission at 5¾ per cent, but the multitudinous elements making for rate changes and affecting operating expenses and the growth of taxation (something like 44 per cent) have upset any plans the commission has been able to formulate in that direction; so that the railroads have not in any year in the last ten years received 5¾ per cent upon the reasonable value of their operating properties.

The commission has been further burdened with the impossible obligation of planning the consolidation of the railroads of the United States into a limited number of systems, maintaining existing channels of trade and a reasonable competition. It has done the best it can, after asking to be relieved of this obligation. No doubt the commission will modify the plan it has published to meet the facts as they develop.

The commission has also been called upon to take from any one railroad into the national treasury one-half of the earnings above a 6-per-cent return on the fair value of its property and to impound the other half for the benefit of the railroad. This penalty upon efficiency and economy the commission does not relish, but it is obliged under the law to collect where it can. On the horizon loom innumerable lawsuits as a result, because of the difficulty in determining a fair value at any given time on any given day for any given railroad.

V

But other factors make a new review by the public of our railroad situation absolutely necessary. Since 1920 the highways, the waterways, the pipe-lines, and, incidentally, the airways, have created an increasingly formidable competition for the railroads everywhere.

Motor-busses have grown from 10,000 in 1921 to 92,500 in 1929. All passenger motor-vehicles increased from 8,226,000 to 23,122,000 in the same period. Motor trucks increased from 1,006,000 to 3,380,000. Traffic between United States ports moving through the Panama Canal grew 637 per cent. Traffic on inland waterways of the United States excluding the Great Lakes almost doubled. The competition of the pipe-lines and the air-lines as common carriers has come into being almost entirely in the last ten years.

The result is that instead of the railroad traffic increasing in response to the marked growth of the country, the passenger revenue of the railroads has decreased in this same nine-year period by 25 per cent. The freight traffic has increased 8.8 per cent in ton miles, this being almost altogether in the longer hauls, the short-line traffic having in substantial measure been taken by the motor-truck.

Very disturbing is the increasing strength of this competition and more marked the effect, for good roads are growing at a great rate; and increasingly large sums are being spent by the government for subsidized transportation both by highway and by water. The federal aid for State roads in 1931 will approximate $125,000,000. Each year has seen a strong demand on the Congress for larger appropriations for waterways. For a long period, pipe-lines have handled crude and fuel oil, but they are now taking the gasoline, and gas pipe-lines are spreading over the country at a greater rate than ever before. A heavy toll has been taken of railroad earnings as a result.

It is estimated that $12,500,000,000 are invested in the rural highways, that is,

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the highways outside of the cities. The railroads have contributed very largely toward this investment in the last fifty years through direct taxation, local assessments in connection with highway improvements, in participation in cost of grade separation (the elimination of grade crossings), and in the paving of streets occupied. Railroad taxes in 1929 were equal to 80 per cent of the dividends paid. In many instances taxes exceeded dividends.

The waterways and highways are furnished by the public as road-beds for carriers competing with the railroads without investment on the part of these carriers. The national government has been indirectly subsidizing these enterprises through aiding, as stated, in the building of the highways. The national and local governments have furnished the capital for making waterways navigable. The national government has lent money for the building of ships to be operated in competition with the railroads at very much less than the going rate for any private enterprise and far less than the rate the railroads are obliged to pay.

The investment of the government in rivers and canals, independent of flood-control protection or harbor improvements, up to 1929 was $588,000,000. There is no return to the government on this investment.

During the war the national government entered into barge operations on the Mississippi and Warrior Rivers. In 1920, after the war was over, these operations were turned over by the government to a government corporation, Inland Waterways Corporation, which has been placed in charge of the War Department. The purpose of the legislation was to carry on such operations "to the point where the system can be transferred to private operation," and, in addition, was to test the economic value of a water carrier under most favorable conditions. That test has been under way eleven years and has followed a programme of expansion including the acquisition of a small railroad. Some $20,000,000 has been given by the government to provide it with its facilities. If charged with interest and taxes as private operation would be, the average annual deficit exceeds a million dollars. In fact, operations have involved a deficit without allowance for interest or taxes. The railroads have been obliged to allow these government waterways to make lower rates than they are permitted to do competitively, and have been obliged to establish through rates in connection with such lines.

The motor-busses and motor-trucks operating on the highways have not been subject to national regulation and only in a limited way to State regulation. The motor-busses have received more attention than the motor-trucks, and in some States regulation is taking on the same form as that applied to the railroads.

The fundamental theory of railroad regulation has been that shippers and passengers should receive the same rates and the same service under like conditions. Alleged discrimination was the major cause of much of the existing legislation.

This theory is now being broken down under motor-vehicle competition. Motor-busses are engaged extensively in service everywhere, including transcontinental service. Motor-trucks have a radius of operation of hundreds of miles. These motor-trucks, aside from those that are owned by an industry, operate principally as contract carriers; that is, they make any rate they choose for any shipment that offers. Under such conditions there is greater discrimination than ever existed in transportation by rail. The railroads under regulation have no opportunity to make rates to compete

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with these free and easy methods. In the State of California, where good roads are plentiful and climatic conditions are favorable to highway operations the year round, a study shows that the earnings of the motor-truck operators are at least equal to the business within the State of all of the railroads combined. Only a small percentage of these motor-truck operators operate under franchises from the State and are subject to regulation. What is true of California is true in some degree everywhere.

The railroads have no quarrel with the motor industry, even though it has taken from them a large share of the passenger traffic formerly enjoyed as well as the growth that under other conditions they would enjoy. It has taken from them a very large part of their local freight traffic, car-loads and less. But it has also given to them very large freight earnings directly and indirectly, now being reduced somewhat by the use of the highways, in the distribution of motor-vehicles. The railroads have no wish to impose unnecessary hardships upon the motor-vehicle industry, or upon waterway operations, or pipe-lines, in the way of punitive public regulation such as excessive taxation.

The National Automobile Chamber of Commerce points out the very great increase in taxation the motor-vehicles have had to bear in the last few years, but their parlous state does not approach that of the railroads with respect to taxation. The taxes upon automobiles, including the carrier for hire competing with the railroads, are principally used in highway maintenance and nearly all the rest devoted to highway construction. But the railroads would call attention to the fact that none of the taxes paid by the railroads (averaging $1,580 per mile) are spent in maintaining the roadways of the railroads. Railroad-maintenance costs average $3,500 per mile and come out of the earnings of the railroad. Nor are any of the railroad taxes used in creating new railroad facilities. Instead, the railroads have been obliged to acquire at their own expense their rights of way and build their transportation facilities thereon. These expenditures on the basis of a fair interest return, say 6 per cent, mean an annual cost at least equal to that of maintaining their roadways and structures.

The airplane service is maintained through mail contracts with the government, giving an expedited service that no other agency can equal. In rendering this faster service, however, the government pays 105 times the average rate per pound that it pays the railways for the mail service rendered by them.

Finally, there is, under the present public laws and policies, objection to the railroads, organized for the purpose of conducting transportation, using these waterways, and, to some extent, the highway facilities that have been aided by the government. The question as to the conditions under which the railways may operate interstate traffic on the highways is now before the Congress. It would seem absurd that these highways that they have helped to create, which parallel their lines, and which have taken from them a substantial part of their traffic, should not be available to them in giving service to the public. In co-ordinating and connecting highway service with rail service lies the best service to the public at the lowest rates. There can be no question of abuse of such right to use the highways with the extended control that the national and State governments now exercise over common carriers.

Under the law the government does not permit the railroads as transportation agencies to use the waterways it has created in competition with them. There are some relatively small excep-

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tions to this rule. Indeed, they cannot even use the ocean with the freedom that our private capital engaged in transportation may use it if the service be between domestic ports. The law is so worded that they cannot have an interest in ship lines operating through the Panama Canal where competition between them exists. There would seem to be no good reason for this if the government regulations be applied equally to both rail and water operations. So far, the railroads are not even allowed to make rates that will compete with ship operations through the Panama Canal. The Interstate Commerce Commission now has once again before it the question of permitting the railroads to make rates that will compete, and which, if the commission authorizes, need not be applied to intermediate points. So to apply them would be destructive to railroad revenues in such degree as to make the application impracticable. But with the railroad plants and facilities established, there is no reason why they should not be allowed to compete with the water transportation through the Canal if they can do so profitably, irrespective of other railroad rates. Ship lines operating through the Canal should have protection against new lines by making the latter secure certificates of public convenience and necessity. The Canal lines are now at liberty to make any rates they choose subject to maxima that the Shipping Board may establish. But with a free-for-all field it has been difficult for them to maintain so-called "conference rates," and the result has been non-dependable rates, and the ship lines as a whole have lacked any reasonable profit notwithstanding the government aid. At the present time, in their eagerness to get traffic, these Canal lines are moving business between Pacific coast points, including not only the principal cities but the interior, and points as far west of Atlantic ports and as far north of Gulf ports as Detroit, Chicago, Cleveland, and intermediate territory.

Some commodities by nature are better adapted to rail movement. Others can be handled to advantage by ships. It should be possible, under a common regulation, for the establishment of rates and service that would naturally divide traffic moved by the Canal and by the railroads on basis of geography and commodities with a fair return to both kinds of transportation, and with a resulting assurance of a stable and efficient service.

Well, what, then, do the railroads want?

Just this: Equality in opportunity and equality in regulation—and that regulation be reasonable; nothing more.

Public interest and justice alike demand this request be promptly granted. Otherwise, the railway companies, chained by public regulation and control, must watch their branch lines and other lines of light traffic disappear under the deadly competition of untrammelled and subsidized highway and water carriers; and the future of their entire properties in many instances made uncertain. I cannot believe that the United States will much longer tolerate these unfair conditions that are giving to its essential transportation agency a creeping paralysis which in the end must sadly affect the welfare of our country as a whole.

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Mexico

By WALDO FRANK

Across the frontier of Rio Grande, two eighteenth-century towns, Laredo and Nuevo Laredo, face each other. One belongs to Texas, one is Mexican. The northern Laredo is a flourishing city of thirty thousand; its broad streets are paved and swift with motors, it has tall hotels, each room with bath, it has cafeterias, movies, drug-stores with national wares. No one is ragged in Laredo. The flesh of the girls is cooled in silk, misted by no grime or perspiration; and the young men cut through the easy hours like brand-new silver knives. Nuevo Laredo's ten thousand dwellers live in huts and alleys. The dirt of the unpaved streets is mud when it rains, and there are holes in the gutters. The dust-bit trees of the central plaza droop upon men on iron benches, who are too poor to loll in the cantinas. The citizens are ragged; those with enterprise seem to have crossed the river and merged with the prosperity of Laredo. In a saloon, a blind man leans against the bar and sings. His heavy hand gently caresses the guitar, and his dog gulps refuse underneath a table. The singer's eyes are leaden but all his face gleams upward. The singing mouth is pregnant of a pain that lives and becomes song, because the world harmoniously accepts it.... Across the frontier of Rio Grande, two cultures face each other. Both are incomplete, wanting some crucial element of wholeness; both in varying degrees long for completion.

All human culture, like a tree, is rooted in earth, rises in earth; is a transfigured form of the earth substance fertilized by light that is more than earthly. All human culture, if it is cut from earth or shut from sun, must wither. Earth gives to man the basic nurture: *bread*. In fecund union with the life of earth, man comes to understand and to control his place, wins skill to move in it and to improve it, and to survive against weather and beast. This, the second part of culture, is *power;* an extension of the first, so that bread-and-power are virtually one. By communion with his earth, by struggle to survive, by intercourse of pain and passion with his fellows, man finds himself; and in himself a light which is beyond the reach of his will to power. This most intimate light casts an impersonal gleam that has no limits, and reveals to him the continuity between himself and the whole. In this revelation, comes his experience of truth and beauty, comes his experience of his need of truth and beauty; comes his acceptance and love of life, now innerly illumined, and his naming it divine. This final part of human culture is *religion*. Bread—power—religion are the triune whole of culture, each part enfolded in the others and unfolding from them. Without them all in due proportion, a race of men is less than wholly human.

The industrial culture of the United States is one of bread-and-power. The North American released from the culture of Catholic Europe has gradually

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diverged from intimate contact with both the soil and the self; propelled by the discrete (atomic) will, he has gone to the earth only for possession, comfort, and expansion; and to himself exclusively for power to propagate material production. In consequence, the third cultural factor, the religious, has dwindled in him, together with his capacity to create and to experience beauty, to know truth (as contradistinguished from the accumulation of mere facts), and to be aware of himself as a purposive integer in a cosmos which self-knowledge illumes and which his deeds establish. More and more, his evaluation of self and life in *qualitative* terms is replaced by *quantitative* measures of mass and force. But this fragmentary state of culture denies man's inner need to experience whole manhood; and in consequence, he suffers. He despises his churches, he degrades his political rulers by admiring in them only his own quantitative power. His folk arts (journal, movie, story) are venal, sterile, ugly. His dwellings, for all their towering steel, look flat and flimsy. His virility as a lover dwindles, and his woman, deprived, remains shrilly adolescent. His capacity to sustain thought and deep emotion becomes feeble. The accepted symbol of this maimed culture is the Machine; not the machine as a servant or as a hand, but as master and norm of values, accumulator at geometrical progression of bread-and-power, and denier of those realms of self and life which are the matrix of religion. And the confession of the American's disease in this incompleted culture is the jazz of his dance and song, which reveals a folk submitting to the rule of the Machine yet by grotesqueries of rhythm, tangents of gesture, plaints of accent, *wistfully dissenting*.

The culture of Mexico from Aztec times has also been incomplete. The integer of bread-and-power was neglected, that of art and religion (which are in essence one) became hypertrophied. And if man cannot live by bread alone, neither can he live alone by beauty. Unlike the Peruvian or the Maya, the late Nahua culture centred its value beyond the cycle of normative living. This Mexican transcendentalism must not be confused with that of the Christian who, in his concept of heaven and personal grace, transposed the power factor to an imaginary future, whence it could easily be retransposed to a cult of power here on earth. Christian transcendentalism was of Nature, not of the ego; Aztec transcendentalism was of the ego and not of Nature. The Aztec's value was in no way outside physical life, his goal was a deep harmony with Nature which could be won only by blotting out the differentiating person, and, in consequence, the personal will. Therefore all work upon Nature, of hand or mind, all personal ease and survival within Nature, were contemned. The cultivation of the soil was debased, although its cult was practised. The folk that worked the land were spiritual pariahs; bodily welfare was neglected; life's passing moments and the arts were valued in the degree that they provided an escape, emotional or æsthetic, from the person's diurnal degradation. The Spaniards, moreover, although they deepened, did not transform the Mexican. The dualism and transcendentalism of their creed, the bondage inherent in their economic system, were absorbed by the Indian and mestizo as a continuance of their own religious and æsthetic culture.

Yet at all times, the folk instinctively rebelled against these official values. Despite all the priests of Huitzilopochtli, god of Sacrifice, and of Christ crucified, his successor, boys and girls had delight of their bodies; old men and wo-

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men loved the quiet hours in which they watched the maize swelling from the ground; husbandmen loved the earth of their garnerings and sowings; women longed for lips to suckle and wept when their babes died. And in their crafts, their dances, their rituals of harvest, their local magics for greater comfort and for ease, the folk of Mexico strove ever to complete their life, despite the indoctrining of death, by raising up the neglected parts of bread-and-power.

Their music bespeaks this striving. It is sad, even when the words are gay, because the smoke of the old Pagan altars and the incense of the new have stained the earth-life and veiled the sun. But the message of their music in numberless variations is always a pæan to the earthly cycle, officially despised: a pæan to comradeship, repose, a pæan to love, a pæan to food and drink. The land is violent, the song is soft; the earth is rock or desert or jungle, the song is loam; the history of Mexico is personal death, the song of Mexico is human breathing.

Every song is a mood breathed forth: a shout, a sigh, a tender assignation, a laughter, a plaint. Deep-breasted Mexico has more songs than trees, yet all have this trait in common: they repeat, again and again, the breathing, long as the hours of men and women. The essence of the Mexican folk music is that it *breathes*.

But this victory is not exultant. The Mexican song, with its cadences of repetition, its recurrent shifts between major and minor, its renewal of innumerable verses, gives the ultimate effect of submission. Whatever the music literally sings, even the *jarabe* trying to be glad, its essence is the burden of breath that goes on indeed, but suffering. And the song's end is a vague dwindling to ultimate silence, as if breathlessness after all were the reward of submission.

This, the paradox of Mexican music: it sings earthly life against an earth that denies life; but wearies of its rebellion and, having won, surrenders. Sorrowful music is not rare in the world, but no music is sorrowful like this. The synagogic chants of the Jews, broken and scattered and longing for their Zion, are sad; but a vigor of hope and resolve sustains their sorrow, there is a God in this music who saves the earth's disaster. The *canto hondo* of Andalusia is sad; but its tensions are the weavings of human will in response to sorrow, its arabesques are constellated lights that gird the darkness. The music of Mexico, born of a desperate hope, is a steady running down. Even its gaiety has a falling cadence: and its ineffable sweetness is like the ebb of blood.

Music alone was not strong enough to bring the solace of completion to this life-denying culture, to this folk which has too intolerably suffered. And the Mexicans, even before the Conquest, sought other means. The reception by the common folk of the invading Spaniard reveals this: and their welcome of the padres, not as theologians but as husbandmen who taught good arts of cultivation, ways to heal their sores and to save their children. The folk of Mexico have always made distinction between the haughty ecclesiasts, whom they accepted because of their old schooling in death, and the humble priests who lived among them and whom they loved because they helped them to live. Again, their longing is revealed in the Mexicans' northward gaze toward the people who have what they lack—the redoubtable *Yanqui* strong with bread-and-power. The attraction between Mexico and the United States has psychic as well as economic causes. . . . But the essential movement of Mexico's will to complete her culture with bread-and-power, the Deed that synthesizes all the others, is the Mexican Revolution.

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II

The Mexican Revolution is not yet over, nor did it begin when the historians date it: in 1910. It is the struggle of the Mexican folk to regain the earth in both the economic and the spiritual sense: to recreate their culture by winning the part of bread-and-power and by transposing the religious part from the varyingly transcendental altars of both Aztec and Catholic pasts to a Nature devoutly loved as the Indians love it, and experienced by modernly integrated persons. This is a Revolution so complex that another century would be brief for its fruition.

The landowners from Spain kindled the Mexicans' hope and betrayed it; on the books of Madrid were benevolent laws, but in the fields and mines was one hard law—the familiar one that life is bitter and death its only guerdon. The Church kindled the Mexicans' hope and betrayed it; in every valley there were padres sharing the toil of the peons, but these sweet men had masters in red robes who compounded the cruelty of the encomenderos. Quetzalcoatl, fair god of the Sun, was once more being devoured by a new Huitzilopochtli, god of Death—a denatured Christ on a cross who permitted earth to be a shambles while he led his flock through sacrifice to salvation. The deep differences between the two theologies escaped the humble Mexican: his eyes saw the same blood on the brocade of the bishop which his Aztec fathers saw in the clotted hair of their priests. Beneath the patina of Christian forms, the colonial life and art of Mexico was a twice-told tale. New Spain, by the close of the eighteenth century, appeared to have become old Mexico again: a land of the triumphant death-god.

Yet there was a great difference—one that alone justifies the Conquest. The Church was rotten: it taught contempt of the flesh and grew fat, it preached water and drank wine, it owned a third of all the Mexican lands. But it had made incarnate in the Mexican masses the hope of freedom. It sustained hope through the theory of the "New Laws of the Indies," it taught hope in the Pelagian doctrine of probable salvation; and by the deeds of countless padres it fostered the dignity and cheer of hope in the humblest peon. Now this hope grows dynamic within the Mexicans, and takes the form of the will to bread-and-power. Hope rises where Spain had planted it, to cast Spain out!

The Mexican War of the Emancipation is the prelude of the Revolution. Its first leader, Miguel Hidalgo, was a lowly priest. From his village of Dolores, which means sorrows, he went forth bearing the image of the Virgin of Guadelupe. This blessed Mary had appeared before a lowly Indian of Tepeyac in the form of an Indian maid; she had led him to the height of Guadelupe: and all Mexico still worships in her deed the symbolic naturalization of the Church. By tens of thousands, the Indians followed Hidalgo against the Spaniard. Another holy man, José María Morelos, unsheathed the sword at his side. But this first lyric rapture broke against the troops of Spain. Hidalgo and Morelos were stripped of their sacred robes and shot by a firing-squad. The war against Spain went on, and Spain was driven out. But not until Hidalgo in modern form revives and is victorious at the head of his folk will the Revolution triumph.

For in this holy man who enacted the prelude of the Revolution are all the themes, still unevolved, of the Drama. Mexico is too great in art to have failed in this æsthetic law: that the play's prelude shall contain its essence and the germ of its conclusion. Hidalgo strove to unite in Mexico the three factors

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needed for independent life: bread, power, religion. But this will in him was not bodied by a method. Bread—but Hidalgo had no means to replace the feudal economic structure which stole the bread of the people. Power—but the physiocrat was ignorant of the industrial revolution. Religion—but the Catholic could not divorce his God from the theology of Rome. He failed, and the sixscore years since the Spanish bullets killed him have not realized his triune will. His action sowed the seed of Revolution; it is not yet uprisen from the ground.

III

After Hidalgo's prelude comes despair. Mexico, having thrust out Spain, lapsed into a chaos where she suffered all the ills of her past without the motherland to guide her through them. The chief figure of this scene is Santa Anna: a small, hard, half-mad fool touched with the bravado of genius. He led his people to the nadir of disaster. With the Church and the few hundred hacendados who now owned Mexico, he thrust the peons, who had fought the Spaniard, back into their darkness. Then he wavered in his servility to the Church and the Church betrayed him: self-divided Mexico paid the price of her division by losing half her land to the United States.

Now comes recovery from Santa Anna and a proceeding, more solid but partial, upon the premises of Hidalgo. The will of Mexico for bread-and-power gives forth a first political leader, Benito Juárez. Hidalgo had been the prelude theme of Revolution; this full-blooded Zapotec Indian, who, for love of his land, became a lawyer, a soldier and a statesman, is its initial act. The archenemy to the folk's attaining bread-and-power was the Church: Juárez declared war on the Church. And since to him the Church was the equivalent of religion, Juárez turned away from religion. His Constitution of 1857 abolished the privileges which had made the military and the clergy the irresponsible rulers of the land. He cut off Church from State; he declared forfeit the vast ecclesiastical acres, leaving the Church bare with its temples alone. He broke the convents and opened thousands of schools; he recalled the Republic's envoy at the Vatican. And of course, in all this, he clove the people. Napoleon III soon found a financial pretext for sending an army into Mexico and set Maximilian of Hapsburg on the throne. Juárez, thrust north to the Rio Grande, fought his way back, threw out the aliens, and died as President of a reunited nation.

But Mexico was exhausted; Juárez had gone too far in his assaults on the Church. The folk needed religion, and as yet no one had come to show them how religion could mean other than a church. Juárez was great, but his problem was greater. Here was a folk hungering to enact their intuition of beauty in a form that would permit them to live; and shackled by the heritage of ages to a doctrine and an economic system which led to death. Juárez saw that bread-and-power were needed, in order that Mexico might live; he did not understand that for this folk of genius life itself must be the experience of religion and that without it bread would be a stone.

After exhaustion comes reaction; after Benito Juárez comes Porfirio Díaz. The man who now ruled Mexico for over thirty years was, on a grand scale, a caricature of Juárez and a fulfilment, in modern terms, of the national vices embodied in Santa Anna. Juárez was schooled in Darwin; Díaz called himself a Positivist and his group the "Scientific Party." His method of governing

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was to deliver up to the capital of France, Great Britain, and (increasingly with the years) of the United States, what Juárez had defended from the army of Napoleon III and what Mexico had saved from the American humiliation of Santa Anna. Mines throbbed with the new machines; railroads were laid from the Capital to Vera Cruz and north to Texas; streets were paved; telephones linked the towns together; money poured into Mexico's coffers. Díaz deployed this wealth to build a carapace of order. In every State he had his chieftains, well paid to uphold him, and his police, well paid to hold the masses in subjection. And unlike Juárez, he had use for the Church whose commission was to second the police in keeping order. So long as it functioned in this holy work, the Positivist and his "Scientists" were satisfied to be its friends. The secular schools which Juárez had opened closed. But the mines were rich, money kept flowing in, and Díaz learned ever better the alchemy which turned it into order. Mexico was quiet.

Díaz had begun as the traditional dictator who, with a lyric thrust of his own will, galvanizes the chaos of his people, because he expresses their instinctive hunger for authority and peace. He continued in power as a dictator of the new dispensation: one whose main strength is the support of foreign capital, which is eager to pay for a tranquil country in order that oil may gush and mines disgorge. Beneath a shell of imported commercial paper, Mexico festered. Never in her tragic history had the folk been so well oppressed. The Aztec tyrants had been Mexican themselves; their cruelty was kin to the spirit of the victims. Spain for all her ignorance and greed married with Mexico and grew Mexican. Even Santa Anna had misruled with native weapons. But the latter power of Díaz was alien: its work was a gradual denaturing of the people, and the peace it clamped on the troubling land was the peace of death. Mexico almost died. The Church, suborned to the "Científicos," stank in corruption. There were no teachers, there were not even politicians. The little way which Mexico had come toward self-control was lost in a régime of bullies and gendarmes, whose true power was the strength of alien money. If the break from the tyranny of Spain had been a stumbling, the break at last from the Machine of Díaz was a frenzy.

IV

With Francisco Madero who in 1910 cried: "Give us land!" the cycle rounds back to the priest Hidalgo who in 1810 had led his peons under the image of the Virgin. In place of the magic Lady, here is a magic word. Land! The Mexicans hungered for their land, and for the wholeness which land alone could give them. Mary the blessed woman—and the soil: to the Mexican they are one. Woman is earth, the place for the planting of the seed and for the birth of the god, and for the caress of hands and for the repose of spirit. The Mexican struggling to emerge from a millennial death-cult longs for life—life, the woman, life which springs from woman. In a hundred years, only the word has changed. The day of Christian symbols is gone: the "Científicos" of Díaz, with their Positivism and their machines, have put an end to them. Since it is the land, pregnant of illumination, they have adored under the name of Mary, now let them march—not for Mary but for "Tierra"!

The land-hungry peons did not see that this Madero was an absurd little fellow with an antiquated gift for physiocratic phrases. They swept him into office. And at once, Madero's part in the long conflict was over. He had turned

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Díaz out, broken the carapace of foreign steel, and released the whirlwind in Mexico's stagnant body.

But this spiritual sleep of thirty years had also been of the inevitable action. Hidalgo had pitifully failed, because he lacked an adequate method; his ideology bound him to the Colonial world from which his impulse freed him. Díaz, delivering up his nation to the toolmakers—the industrial Powers—let in the tools it needed, technological and mental. Electric wires, rails and railroads, machinery of mine and well, and the organizing thought that goes with them, were weapons with which Mexico could fight her sterile mountains and her stagnant valleys; and thus approach the solution of her task, the welding together of bread-and-power with religion.

Now Madero is shot at the instance of the reactionary soldier, Victoriano Huerta, who usurps control. The scene becomes so bewildering a chaos that the perspective of two decades scarcely reveals its nucleus of integration. It is a complex of fragmentary wills embodied in fragmentary leaders; and Mexico's need is to fuse these wills together. Huerta represents the atavistic bias toward order in terms of pretorian force. From him, all that is forward-yearning in the land recoils. In the south rises Emiliano Zapata, the bloody Saint Francis of the peon. He is pure and ruthless, dispensing terror as the Assisan prayer and alms. Barefoot, in white cotton trousers, with the broad petate hat low over hungering eyes, he and his thousands march through the sugar fields of Morelos and Guerrero claiming the land that Madero promised. When his host enter the Capital, the women lock themselves away and desperately tell their beads. But the Zapatistas, holding a gun in one hand, stretch out the other for bread. They will kill for their land; but the city is not land, here they are humble. In Yucatan, Felipe Carillo Puerto rediscovers the ancient measure of his folk, the Maya, and applies it to the business of a peasants' republic. Both these social saints are murdered by the men of Venustiano Carranza.

In Carranza's rise to power, after the escape of Huerta, the traits of bureaucratic Mexico foregather. He is cunning, cruel, vain; he is contemptuous of study and method; he is corrupt. An abyss separates him from his people, for he is without art or religion. Devout lands produce these monsters in whose anæsthesia there is a kind of balance to the hyperæsthesia of the folk. Carranza has at least one good trait: he is firm in his dealings with Washington. Otherwise, he is a true son of Díaz; and the land he rules shrinks from this apparition of the political past. The men who have written the new Constitution of 1917 in which the statutes of Juárez are revised, know that Carranza must abhor it, and awaits only sufficient security to wipe it out. They seek the man who can destroy Carranza.

In the north they find him: Pancho Villa, roaming and ravaging with a ragged army. The earth of Mexico, denied its sweet possession by the Indian, has grown savage and has risen. This is Villa: the infuriated soil of Mexico, lustful and lone. The peons understand him and crowd his ranks. He is a man who lives by death and by women. Under his savagery plays a fretful tenderness. When he puts down the pistol, it is to caress the body of a girl. Villa seems to be the one practical answer to Carranza; and the intellectuals—half in fear, half in disgust—accept him. The tragedy of the Revolution comes to this new climax: that to save it from the cynical politics of Carranza, there is only Villa, the earth-brute.

Carranza goes the way of the better

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men—Zapata, Carillo—he was shot. With his disappearance, the reason for Villa dwindles. This bestial and potent child has had in Angeles the most brilliant general of Mexico to plan his battles; men of genius, like José Vasconcelos and Martín Luis Guzmán, have been his aides-de-camp. Now, the intellectuals steal away, whenever Villa's gun is pointed elsewhere. His Army of the North becomes once more what it was before the hope born of despair had raised it up: a band of marauders. And Villa disappears in the arid stretches south of Rio Grande, which he had turned into a vision of earth moving, devouring. But he has done his share. Now, from the State of Sonora—symbolically close to the United States—rise three men who are to make the first firm stand in the chaos.

V

They are Alvaro Obregón, Plutarco Calles, Adolfo de la Huerta. Their leader, Obregón who becomes President in 1920, is the first statesman to master Mexico since Juárez. He is a narrower and bloodier man, and perhaps the hour demands him. Juárez's foes, the Church, Napoleon III, the Austrian Prince in the Palace of Chapultepec, were a frail menace beside the perfect modern greed of the North. Wherever there is petroleum or metal, there is this cancer of corruption (of which the industrial civilization of the United States is merely the most perfect symbol), spreading, eating the vitals of the people. Díaz abetted, and profited by, its progress. And now that the land is a confusion of broken farms and cities, the blood of the folk is too impoverished to resist the alien scathe of lobbyists, bribers, gunmen, working with the native politicians. Obregón has fought through the ten years since Madero; his will is harsh and his vision a straight line. Mexico must be saved—soil and subsoil—from the capitalism represented by the North! And Mexico will be saved, only if she learns to take from the men of the North the skill which makes them dangerous. The United States must be admitted to the land, must be admitted in friendship: must be allowed to drive wells and dig mines, to make loans for railroads, to earn a profit. Yet within Mexico, which needs these dangerous weapons and which must love the North in order to absorb its genius, the North must be held in check. This is the exquisite problem of Obregón. In order to control the indispensable enemy who brings skill to the business of bread-and-power, Mexico must control herself. And that this may be, she must know herself. Knowledge brings unity, and peace.

Obregón's first tool is the Law of 1917, in which the defensive measures of Juárez have been transposed against foreign ownership of mines and wells. The mines already worked by foreign hands cannot be retaken; but Mexico's subsoil—her future wealth—has been frivolously mortgaged for immediate dollars. Obregón proceeds for the first time to enforce the Constitution, and encounters the fury of Wall Street, abetted by the rampant national pride of Washington. He dares not fight the North, he dares not yield: both simplicities would be death. The long, delicate joust of compromise begins, Mexico's need of bread-and-power and need of the North to help her win them, and the North's instinctive urge to envelop the Southern nation.

Meantime, the land awakes, the great work starts of saving Mexico by self-knowledge. The intellectuals take office; some at home, some abroad on diplomatic missions. Manuel Gamio and his followers begin their restoration of the Toltec ruins in Teotihuacán: archæolo-

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gy and present folkways are joined in a new native cycle, making the Mexican once more whole with his land, with his fathers, with his future. José Vasconcelos becomes Minister of Public Education. He is a mystic who believes in politics; a man who can capture the spirit of the Upanishads on the petate of a Mexican hovel. He organizes his Teachers' Missions to spread the revival of dignity through the remotest valleys. From town to town goes the group: physician, nurse, craftsman, agriculturist, painter, teacher of letters and numbers, and draws to itself potential local teachers, and inspires them to work among the Indians, in order to recreate their sense of continuity with the past and with the land. The schools of Juárez are reopened. Architects and artists, at a workman's wage, build new houses and adorn them.

With wonderful swiftness, Mexico finds voice. Everywhere, the crafts of the tribes awaken. Potteries, weavings in straw and cloth, silverwork, woodwork, carving, and painting spread with new songs and dances, like a sudden bloom. Mexico's black soil stands at Spring. In the Capital, the young artists climb on scaffolds, cover the walls of schools and official buildings with a plastic splendor whose equal America has not seen since the empire of the Incas. They form a "Revolutionary Syndicate of Technical Workers, Painters and Sculptors." The Soviet of Russia shapes the words of their journal *El Machete;* but their brushes and chisels speak Mexican. The work of three men must be summarily chosen to describe this first great plastic movement, although at least a dozen artists have emerged from it into the realms of authentic and independent art.

VI

Abraham Angel comes from some hidden village, an apparition prophetic and angelic. He paints a few pictures in the studio of his friend Manuel Rodríguez Lozana, and suddenly drops dead, at the foot of his high easel. His work brings the folk of Mexico to the new morning. The background is the land, knotted and hard: its abrupt planes and sudden colors weave a fugue of imperviousness to man, this earth is a loveliness impenetrable to man's wooing. But upon the earth is a human figure—an Indian girl: she is heavy, yet luminous, her long strong limbs have risen from this earth, partake of it, and pour flame-like upward into the blue of the sky. She is the victorious miracle of human Spring: mankind that has rotted in the soil of winter leaps now forth, in a straight green leaf, to the open.

José Clemente Orozco is the poet of Mexico's tragic womb. In the early days of the Revolution, he lived in a garret of the city and drew caricatures for radical journals. These revelations of bourgeois, bureaucrat, soldier, prostitute, had a detailed precision as if the victims themselves, suddenly possessed by a fierce love of truth, had drawn them. Now comes Orozco's chance: the tiered galleries of the Court of the National Preparatory School, once a Colonial palace, are bare plaster. Orozco climbs up and begins to cover them with paint; to fill them indeed with a life so profound that the flat walls, sonorous with depths, are caverns. Orozco is a man whose clumsiness is the slow rhythm of unrevealed emotion, whose peon strength is tender, whose dark eyes are open like the nights of his country. And his pictures on the walls of an old palace, noisy with the students of a modern school, are the womb of a people. Soldiers march to revolution, clumps of the earth made alive by a fierce hunger. Women fall athwart their feet that trample cruelly and yet know pity. Padres of old bind

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the farms together with the arched tension of their prayer. Cortés himself, full-mailed beside his nude Malinche, portrays the terror of this marriage of an alien armor with the bare flesh of the land. And from this embrace of Christian steel with the high breasts and the round soft belly of Malinche is born the Mexican Mother. She is a gray hulk prone on the earth beside a coffin. A woman like earth. The upraised head eternally saluting her immolated son. The mouth and eyes accepting. Ready like earth to bloom again and again in the embrace of life.

And Diego Rivera: round-faced, round-bellied giant, with a heart of lust, a wit of lightning, a hand diamond-clear. He goes to Paris, learns the craft of the most modern painters. He goes to Russia, absorbs the mysticism of Karl Marx. He returns to his Mexico full of the destiny of the modern world. He paints his visions on the walls of ministerial buildings, chapels, schools. Abraham Angel has given the motto-theme of the Revolution. In forms dense as earth, luminous as dawn, he has sung his plastic prophecy, and disappeared. Orozco has painted as from the womb of his folk. His forms are feelings that coil and writhe with a dark necessity. His colors are all shadows. His world is a shut infinity without exterior or extension. The surfaces are merely the echoes of gravid depths, and the figures fold upon each other in spasmic prophecies of motion. The air and earth of a dolorous world enclose these men and women, as the walls of a womb enclose the infant. But Rivera sees Mexico in flower. He is the intellectual, the deliberate constructor. Orozco and Angel have dwelt in the depths of their land; Rivera is its projecting mind and will. The color of Angel is earth; the color of Orozco is blood; the color of Rivera is the bloom of a cultivated land. His peasants are already at their peaceful toil, and his women hold happy babes at the breast. The Revolution has won! Here are its children grouped like garlands. There is no struggle in their configurations, and their faces are emotionally torpid. They are all charted and together, functioning in a social Pattern. But this calm is fertile, for it is of the earth. The Revolution is the victory of earth. It has brooded fecundly; it has risen in pain: now it spreads benign under the universal sky. The faces of Rivera's women are expressionless and secret, like the faces of new-sown fields in the Spring; the gestures of his men are melodious like the branches of young trees. There is the aroma of mildness and repose in these pæans of Revolution. Rivera's work, immense and complex, articulates the dream of the folk to make a Mexico—from the most ancient watch-tower of the Maya to the most modern oil-well—in which all men shall breathe and prosper.

VII

In plastic form, Mexico has a sure and great tradition: therefore it was natural that the first materialization of her revolutionary dream was art. But in the arts of living in the modern world—a world dominated by the standards, more even than by the economic forces, of the powerful nation of the North—the folk of Mexico has scarcely reached the threshold of promise. Rivera's grandiose symphonies of Order are like the apocalyptic poems written in the ruins of old Rome: he painted them in chaos, and they look down to-day, from their walls, on chaos.

Before Obregón had been three years in office, Mexico's tragic traits—fruit of her cult of death—were against uprising: her inability to co-operate peacefully toward social order, her love for violence and for personal destruction. Obregón

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himself, exclusively stressing the need of "bread-and-power," had lost contact with the spiritual need of his people; and had surrendered to Mexico's endemic malady of political corruption. When Calles became President, de la Huerta rose against him: the Sonora Triumvirate was broken. And although his insurrection failed, much that was creative in Mexico's public life, and which had just entered it, went with him into exile. In Calles and the followers of Calles (who to-day wield a power as absolute as that of Mussolini), the creed of bread-and-power has grown so narrow—as it must when it ignores the element of religion—that it is close to tyranny. The agrarian programme, which was the slogan of 1910, was fast turned into a travesty by politicians. And when Dwight Morrow of the House of Morgan arrived as American ambassador, a new Thermidor gripped the Revolution.

The reaction is suave and humanitarian—as befits a banker so civilized as Morrow, the true shaper of Mexico's policy since 1927. The Imperialism of the North requires order to do business: and Mexico, prematurely stopped in her travail, is forced by the ideal of Business to go undelivered. But the humanitarianism of money never prevents starvation. Seven million children of the peons, dislocated from the *haciendas,* are to-day swarming in economic chaos: their old chains are gone, but the land and the tools and the financial aid to make their freedom real have not yet been provided.*

*Calles in 1930 candidly confessed the failure of the agrarian programme which was the slogan of 1910. Carleton Beals, perhaps Mexico's keenest economic critic, in a courageous address delivered in Mexico City in the summer of 1930, declared: "The Revolution has become a reactionary dictatorship . . . and is trying to forget its economic programme."

In 1929–30, José Vasconcelos rose in an attempt, more lyrical than political, to reintegrate the triune form of Mexico's revolution. But his appeal to religion was too vague, too close-allied with the form of Catholic reaction; and his effort to save the economic factor of Mexico's rebirth from subjection to the United States was impotent. His presidential campaign, and his call to insurrection, alike were failures. He went into exile, appealing now to the youth of all America Hispana to band together in sober union of the mind and the spirit, in order to recreate their race.

This gesture of the Mexican Vasconcelos toward his young brothers in Cuba, Colombia, Peru, marks a new positive phase in the Mexican Revolution. As an exclusive national movement, the uprising of 1910 has failed against the inner reaction which wins its force and its technique from the United States. The leaders of Mexico now for the first time turn toward the Hispanic Continent: they appeal to the youth of all the young republics to work together in the creation of a *technique of leadership* which alone can carry through the regenerative labor.

Meantime, the new art of Mexico and the travelling schools which have not been abandoned are a light which gradually illumines every Mexican on the soil. The peon is gone. The Mexican citizen who succeeds him has not received his land—his holy land of "bread and power and religion," in search of which his fathers joined Hidalgo and Madero. But he has cast off intellectual chains; he has learned that he can live without the bishop and the padre; he has shattered the forms of his old economic bondage. The Mexican peasant is *in motion*. With leadership, that motion will yet bring birth.

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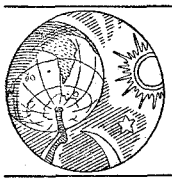
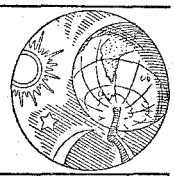


STRAWS IN THE WIND

Significant notes in American life to-day



The Humanizing of Hoover

By SILAS BENT

LET no one suppose that the "humanizing" of Herbert Hoover is a spectacle new in American life. It is justified by a long line of precedent, perhaps by mass psychology; and if it has attracted unusual attention, it is because the effort to replace in the public mind the picture of the frowning engineer among his blue prints and statistical tables by a genial and somewhat ebullient executive has involved a turnover rather more sudden and drastic than usual.

This political era might well be called the reign of the publicity Plantagenet. The press-agent does the talking and the manœuvring nowadays. Since 1912, when Theodore Roosevelt made his last and disastrous bid for public favor, the plain-spoken politician has been rare and sporadic. As a rule the sanctuary of the so-called leader has been the storm-cellar, and his topics of conversation no more important than the weather. Thus there has been reared for an admiring electorate, in recent years, in front of the figure of Warren Gamaliel Harding, the façade of a far-seeing "statesman" who planned and put through the Washington conference on the limitation of armaments. In front of Calvin Coolidge, the most garrulous man who ever occupied the White House, was erected the protective screen of a strong and silent New Englander. These were but extensions of practices which all Presidents have used with greater or less success.

"Man is essentially an idolator—that is, in bondage to his imagination," wrote the elder Oliver Wendell Holmes, sire of the present Justice, "for there is no more harm in the Greek word *eidolon* than in the Latin word *imago*. He wants a visible image to fix his thought, a scarabee or a *crux ansata,* or the modern symbols which are to our own time what these were to the ancient Egyptians." The "human" Mr. Hoover is one of those "visible images" to fix the thought of the voter, in preparation for 1932.

One cannot say that the effort has been marked throughout with good taste or sound judgment. Thus we find a broadcaster, talking over a national hook-up, telling about the President's breakfast with his grandchildren. Let me quote him verbatim:

"A small girl of five and her younger brother swarm onto their grandfather's lap, and after them and onto the same lap leaps a flop-eared and gangly puppy dog, while the grandfather is seated at the breakfast table.

"Grandfathers' laps were made for that purpose, too. In the case of this particular grandfather, a whole long night had passed since they had seen him, and this is their method of greeting him.

"But the puppy dog, I am sorry to relate, succumbs to temptation. From his point of vantage he can see, yes, and can reach, the Presidential plate, and while a horrified waiter looks on helplessly, a lightning-like snip is made and a carefully fried egg, prepared for President Hoover himself, disappears into that bottomless pit that is every puppy dog's stomach."

That touching sketch of family affection and domestic deportment was more salutary in its general consequences, I suspect, than the exploitation of Bryan Untiedt, juvenile hero of a Colorado blizzard, who saved the lives of several school-bus companions. The President could have liquidated the obligation imposed by his office by instructing one of his secretarial corps to write, for his signature, a letter to the youth, expressing appreciation and admiration; his press-agents did not think this enough. Bryan was commanded to visit the White House, was interviewed on nearly everything from a pick-axe to the Ten Commandments, visited the Zoo time and again with Mrs. Hoover, played his harmonica for

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dancing by the ineffable grandchildren, cooked a park lunch and was lionized at a great rate. What would the glare of the spotlight do to the psychology of an immature youngster? To some observers the incident appeared to be the ruthless and unscrupulous employment of a helpless boy for the personal aggrandizement of a political figure. It so happens, praise be, that Bryan has a distinctly sensible mother. On his return, laden with presents, Mrs. Untiedt had him put aside his "store clothes" for overalls, assist her with the week's washing, and help his father feed the pigs. No motion-picture contract for him, his mother said; no "ghost-writing" and no hero stuff. She intended to make the boy understand that nothing counted in life but authentic achievement. He seemed safe, despite his upsetting White House experience.

These and other artifices were credited in Washington to Theodore G. Joslin, formerly Washington correspondent of the Boston *Evening Transcript,* who succeeded George Akerson as the President's "political" secretary and publicity adviser. Mr. Akerson, who was closer than any other man to Mr. Hoover when Secretary of Commerce, had resigned to put his Washington experience at the service of the motion-picture industry, and Mr. Joslin, an industrious, likable and loyal person, replaced him. He put at the service of the President a good working knowledge of politics from the standpoint of a man outside looking in, and he understood public opinion as the *Transcript* understands it; nor must any one suppose that the *Transcript,* although a class paper edited for the Back Bay, doesn't understand "human interest." The suspicion among Washington correspondents, with whom Mr. Joslin is highly popular, is that he may have overplayed the "human interest" factor in his "story." Yet Mr. Hoover, if we are to judge by his complaisance in the publicity about his child welfare activities, doubtless approved, at least so far as the grandchildren and Untiedt ballyhoo was concerned.

The President has four busy secretaries, none more powerful now than Lawrence Richey, whose name formerly was Ricci. He has had a varied career as a government secret-service agent, as a private detective for William J. Burns, and subsequently as an operative for Scotland Yard. It was in the last capacity, while Mr. Hoover was abroad during the World War, that he came to know and like the young man, and attached him to his retinue. Although all Presidents are guarded by secret-service agents—a secret-service man took Bryan Untiedt to his home in Colorado—I cannot learn that any other has ever entrusted a private detective with the post of confidential secretary. There has been some resentment of Mr. Richey's influence among Washington correspondents and, so I am competently informed, among some of the other secretaries. Of the four, it is he who has readiest access to the Presidential ear.

It so happens that Mr. Joslin has a deal of research work to do, and that when he is out of his office on such tasks Mr. Richey moves from his inner sanctum to the Joslin desk. This has given rise in some quarters to a belief, which I think is unfounded, that he is shouldering Mr. Joslin to one side. More interest attaches to a new addition to the corps.

This was George A. Hastings, selected to succeed French Strother as "ghost writer" for the President. (Many of the executive's letters and speeches are prepared for him, as a time-saving device.) Mr. Strother, formerly a magazine editor, had contracted to serve one year as Mr. Hoover's literary *alter ego;* he had served two years, and he felt that he should return to New York, where he had certain financial interests and where he would have better opportunities as a free-lance writer. Mr. Hastings took his desk on June 1; he had been a publicity promoter for New York welfare organizations, and press representative for the Committee on Dependency and Neglect, of Mr. Hoover's Child Health conference, of which I spoke in SCRIBNER'S last July; he had been an instructor in the extension department at Columbia University, had held a post in the New York State Charities Aid Association, and had been a secretary of the State Committee on Mental Hygiene. It was a matter of comment, but of no special significance, that he differed widely in background and temperament from his predecessor.

Walter H. Newton, the fourth secretary (like Mr. Akerson, a Minneapolis product), is a lawyer and former influential representative in the House, where for a time he was a member of the Republican Steering Committee. He had charge of the Speakers' Bureau for the Republican National Committee in the 1926 Congressional campaigns, and resigned from the House two years ago to take his present secretarial post. Obviously it is to him that the President might logically turn for "inside" political advice, but there is an impression in Washington that he has not the shrewdness nor the flexibility, say, of Bascom Slemp, who served Calvin Coolidge ably in that capacity.

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This formidable secretariat has had its hands full since the collapse of the stock market in the fall of 1929 and the prolonged subsequent depression. It is a lot harder to defend than to attack, and the White House has been solely a fortress of defense. The "humanizing," or, if you prefer, the naturalizing of Mr. Hoover, began on a small scale, to be sure, even before Mr. Joslin took his post, with the White House Conference on children; but after Mr. Joslin's arrival it was done in a bigger and presumably better way. Chiefly through the daily press but partly by radio there was broadcast to the nation at large the presence of a kindly soul, so devoted to his duties that he would spend only week-ends at the Rapidan camp, fond of sports and of all things pertaining to the wee ones, absorbed in the heroes of the day and full of friendly emotions.

Thus the delegation of Democratic women of dry predilections, who had refused to vote their ticket in 1928 because of the prohibition issue, and the women of both parties who favored prohibition repeal, found the President equally "glad" to see them; the news despatches told of a "busiest day" at the executive offices, beginning at 9:30 A.M., although it included an hour and a half for lunch, two and a half hours at the ball park, and a private dinner in the evening. In summer Washington swelters, and even with a new system for cooling the White House air Mr. Hoover's absorption in his responsibilities meant actual self-sacrifice during the hot months. His morning set-to with the medicine ball, too, gave to an electorate which recalled his avoirdupois the sense of a very earnest and "human" person.

It would be unfair to criticise these practices as an imposition on America's mass gullibility. The public has invited them, and has appeared to enjoy them. All politicians know about them or learn quickly to utilize them. It is quite beside the point to wander off into detail about specific instances of such tactics. It is more to the point to reflect on their repercussions and their significance as an established part of our political scene.

To what extent, for example, has the triumphant ascendancy of the publicity man in politics contributed to the spreading doubts about the ultimate success of the republican experiment? To what extent has it emphasized the feeling that governments have very little to do, after all, with the important things that happen to nations? A quarter of a century ago Edward Everett Hale, in "Memories of a Hundred Years," noted that even during the nineteenth century, when the press-agent had gained no such eminence and authority as enfolds him now, but was more likely to be the editor or correspondent of a friendly paper, politicians had little to do with the development of this United States. He thought that Napoleon Bonaparte, Robert H. Livingston, Eli Whitney and Robert Fulton were the Four Horsemen, although of course he did not use that phrase. Napoleon had sold us an empire for a song, and Chancellor Livingston as Minister to France had bought it on his own responsibility; Whitney had invented the cotton gin and Fulton had produced the steamboat, which helped open the West to settlement. None realized even faintly, the author observed, what posterity would owe him. And Goldwin Smith, looking at American politics from a different vantage point, held that the levelling effect of party conventions, happy hunting-grounds of publicity hounds, had prevented the nomination for the Presidency, save by accident, of our great men.

The democratic tradition, nevertheless, fosters the notion that elected persons are distinguished and able citizens. The publicity man plays upon this superstition successfully, to the gratification and enlargement of the personality he is dressing up. He pretends owlishly to know all about the public "reaction" to this, that, and the other, and nourishes, if he does not demand, that pussyfooting on the part of his chieftain which has become a marked feature of the Washington landscape, and of all political centres. It is a little disquieting to reflect that this is a government of propaganda, that the technic of evasion and the false-front has been most highly developed at the national capital, and that some of the big-wigs of the game are to be found in the White House secretariat. "The basis of our governments being the opinion of the people," wrote Thomas Jefferson, "the very first object should be to keep that right." The very first object of the political publicity man is to befuddle and confuse public opinion about leaders and, sometimes, issues.

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Why Fear Russia?

By W. J. AUSTIN

AS TOLD TO FREDERICK A. VAN FLEET

As president of The Austin Company, which is constructing in Soviet Russia a complete city to cost approximately $60,000,000, in which Ford cars and trucks will be made, Mr. Austin has had unusual opportunity to study at close range the workings of the new régime in Russia. He speaks with greater authority than many whose opinions are based on political or social theory alone.

THERE will be no head-on collision between Soviet Russia and capitalistic America. Those who predict that there will are speaking, I fear, without careful study of the facts or analysis of the controlling factors in the situation.

Most of the opinion expressed seems to be that of extremists. We have on one hand a considerable group of conservatives to whom everything that is done by the present régime in Russia is wrong. They do not like the doctrines or methods of the Soviet leaders and so will not admit that anything they could do will have any merit.

On the other hand is an idealist group who at least profess to believe that communism is not only possible of attainment but represents the ultimate in theory of government and social relation.

Between these two extremes of thought lies the truth, which is that what is being done for 160,000,000 people in the way of education, enlightenment, and material well-being is vastly more important than how it is being done or who is doing it.

The trouble with the world to-day, if we may state it in broad and general terms, is that there are too many submerged peoples. What we need is more five-year plans in countries like China and India.

In condemning out of hand everything that the Soviet officials do in Russia our conservative critics base their objections on four principal premises. These are:

1. That the Soviets are as despotic in their rule as the Czarist government which they overthrew.

2. That the communistic theory threatens the political systems in the more enlightened countries of the world, which are capitalistic in belief.

3. That an industrialized Russia threatens the economic peace of the rest of the world because the vast natural resources and great population of Russia will enable her to dominate or destroy world markets.

4. That the Soviet Government is frankly atheistic and because of that fact threatens the religious peace of the world.

I hold no brief for Soviet Russia because my company is doing a big job for the Soviet Government. Ours is a purely business relation which does not involve our subscribing to Soviet political theories or Soviet officials subscribing to ours. That fact was settled early in our negotiations when we made clear our unwillingness to undertake any piece of work which did not promise a legitimate profit measured by the standards of capitalism. Soviet acceptance of our position made it clear that business and politics were not to be mixed.

Neither do I make any objection to the most earnest opposition on the part of any conservative critic of the Soviet régime, if that opposition is based on knowledge and consideration of all the facts. But I do not hold with the man who says pointblank that the whole Russian scheme is wrong and refuses to take into consideration any of the facts other than those which support his views.

We can neither ignore nor thoughtlessly dismiss from consideration any movement which vitally affects the government of one-sixth of the world's land area and the future of 160,-

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000,000 people. Because I believe this I am willing to add my views to the sum of the general discussion on this new thing in world governments.

When we criticise the Soviet Government for autocratic rule it would be well to remember that probably nothing short of autocracy would maintain any semblance of order in a vast country which has for centuries known only despotic government. It is perfectly true that the Soviet party has seized for itself the power formerly held by the Czar and his government and is administering it in much the same way.

It is equally true that millions of peasants on the farms and in the small towns have no faint conception that there is any other sort of government. Entirely without education, knowing nothing of other lands, other people or other customs, the Russian peasant and his father and grandfather before him have looked to some official to say what he could do and what he could not. What matter to him whether that official is a petty officer of a Czar or a petty official of a political party? He is still an official and still holds in his hands a power which the peasant looks to somebody to hold.

Here we must give the Soviets some credit. The education of the masses is one of the main features of their governmental programme. Elementary schools are being built as rapidly as possible, and in the cities great attention is paid to advanced schools and technical institutions. For those millions who can neither read nor write, educational efforts along visual lines, with the aid of pictures and posters, are being carried on.

Soviet leaders believe, of course, that by implanting Soviet doctrines in the almost virgin minds of the peasants with their first elementary education they will assure the acceptance of those doctrines permanently. Whether this is true or not is beyond the power of any person to say definitely.

With the rudimentary education is going an intensive effort to teach the peasant and town or city worker to use his hands in the industrial and mechanized farm plans. This sort of education is the shortest cut to enlightenment for the hitherto ignorant Russian. It parallels the most advanced theories of child education in this country, where the kindergarten pupil is now started on the educational path with simple games and exercises rather than with charts of letters and figures.

Other opinion to the contrary notwithstanding, I am inclined to believe that, autocratic and despotic as the rule of the Soviets may be, it is the only sort of government that could stand between the great mass of the Russian people and chaos, once the admittedly impossible rule of the Czars was ended.

Also, at the risk of unthinking criticism, I am ready to say that the Soviet rule is an improvement over the Czarist rule. Stalin, the Soviet head, is more of a party leader than he is constitutional or hereditary ruler. His power is derived from the vote of a party which, while not embracing more than a small fraction of the general population of the country, is still fairly general in character. That all the party leaders believe the continuance of their power rests on the approval of the party directly and the whole people indirectly is shown by the ceaseless and intensive propaganda which is carried on in behalf of Soviet theories. The Czar never thought he had to convince his subjects of the correctness of his ideas.

The conclusion, then, seems inescapable that the Soviet Government is a beginning, crude though it may be, of a system of self-government for the Russian people. How far that system of self-government will develop in the next few generations it is beyond the ability of either Soviet propagandist in Russia or Soviet antagonist in America to say.

If we want to turn to history we may find some little guidance. In the French Revolution the Communes shouldered King and royalist supporters from places of power, beheaded hundreds of them and set up a self-appointed autocracy of government by the Communes. A century and a quarter have passed and no more democratic and responsive government exists than the government of France.

Turning to the second of the major objections which critics make to the Russian experiment, the fear that Russian communism threatens the existence of other forms of government, I wonder how many of the critics realize that Russia has a government which in its practical working is more of a system of state capitalism than anything else.

As things stand to-day the Soviets are the state and the state owns all property. The state is taking the place of the private capitalist. If the state were composed of all the people, the government might be called communistic, but the state, which is the political party which wields the power, comprises but a small fraction of the people.

Communism, if I understand it, is based on the theory that all the people own all prop-

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erty and that each individual has as much right in that ownership as any other individual. Is this the case in Russia? Far from it. The great mass of Russian citizens may enjoy only such part of the property of the state and that only to such an extent as the Soviet Government, in which they have no voice, shall decree.

Russia as a whole is no more fitted for communism than it is for self-government. In fact, true communism implies self-government because all the people cannot equally own and equally enjoy all the wealth of a country and lack the power to appoint their own administrators and conservators of that wealth.

The fear that an industrialized Russia will dump goods on the markets of the world, to the economic destruction of the countries which now supply those markets, does not take into account the vastness of Russia's own potential market. Possibly excepting India and China, no people in the world are so great and own so little. Millions of Russian peasants and laborers own the poor clothes they wear and a few rude articles of household use and nothing more.

They have been employed in poorly paid labor for others and in crude attempts to till the soil. Now, that labor is being directed toward industrial pursuits and mechanized farming. Does anybody think that the Russian people will not want to own and use the things they are taught to make? Put the peasant who has never owned a pair of boots at work in a shoe factory and keep him barefoot if you can. Teach him to run a tractor and raise wheat in wholesale quantities and then ask him to continue to live on black bread. Make him a producer and he will insist on being a consumer.

Unless the Soviet rulers of Russia are able to reverse the processes of nature by ukase we will see the domestic market for food stuffs and manufactured goods grow at a rate that will amply keep pace with Russia's ability to produce for many years to come. There may be, in isolated cases, some sale of commodities in world markets for what they will bring in the years when the Russian Government is straining every resource for the completion of the plan for industrialization. Unable to obtain credit, this is the only way in which they can procure gold to pay for their imports. The whole country is being held to a pitch of self-denial to help the five-year plan that would hardly be thought possible. But no people will sacrifice their own needs and desires indefinitely for any belief.

We have only to turn back the pages of our own country's history a few years to find illustration of what happens in market development when goods are made available for all the people. While the people of the United States at the beginning of this century were prosperous beyond comparison with the Russian people to-day, they had hardly begun to enjoy the full measure of American manufacturing genius.

The era of invention and improvement had the immediate effect of producing goods and commodities in ever-increasing quantities and at ever-decreasing prices, and the increase in domestic market kept pace with production.

The result was that while the population of the United States increased approximately fifty per cent in the first quarter of the present century, the value of manufactured goods produced in the country became five and a half times as large and the per capita wealth two and a half times as large.

This comparison, it might almost be said, starts with the luxuries, because there was already a wide distribution of the ordinary essentials. The Russian market starts at the beginning, because most of the people have not what we would consider even the barest necessities of life. That vast and almost utterly unfilled market will stand between Russian industrial production and world-market disturbance for a great many years to come.

The Soviet attitude toward the Christian church is one which it is not easy for Christian nations to excuse, but it is fairly easy to understand when all the facts are considered. The established Russian church, the only one the Russians knew about, was part and parcel of the Czarist régime. Its support was forced on the Russian people and its priests and officials were as powerful as other representatives of the Czar.

The whole religious system was so tied up, in the minds of the people, with the system of government that a revolt against one became a revolt against the other. Regrettable as the complete swing to atheism may be, it is easy to understand how, when the Czar and his priests were proven but weak mortals, after all, the ignorant laborer and peasant could be made to believe that the failure was a failure of all religion rather than a failure of a particular set of individuals.

My own Wesleyan forefathers resented and refused longer to countenance a church which was a creature of the state. In fact, all Protestantism is founded on a similar revolt. The Russian people, in similar revolt, have only

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been too ignorant to differentiate between a religious belief itself and some of its unworthy exponents.

It seems to me that the churchman who condemns the groping Russian nation because of a natural reaction against an intolerable religious oppression and thinks that because of that reaction atheistic leaders can uproot all belief in God from the minds of the people is giving the religion he professes scant credit for power. To argue that the Christian religion can be uprooted by propaganda, Soviet or otherwise, amounts to an argument that it can be maintained only by propaganda. That is something which intelligent and sincere believers in the Christian religion will be loath to admit.

In the course of considerable business contact with Soviet officials we have found them straightforward and honorable in their dealings. I do not subscribe to their political theories, but I believe that in the main they are sincere in their beliefs. They are working indefatigably on industrialization and farm mechanization.

Success or failure of the Soviet idea of government depends almost entirely on the outcome of a conflict between human ideas and human nature. If they can teach a great people to make things without wanting to individually own them; if they can bring into being that pride of creation which is necessary to make their industrialization a success without at the same time creating the pride of possession; if they can subordinate family to communal life and recreation to education indefinitely, then Russia may become a truly communistic state.

As far as they have gone the Soviet rulers have shown no fear of compromise. This is illustrated by a number of things which have happened, and may well be considered the greatest hope for the Russian future.

Take the matter of the communal farms, for instance. Originally the plan was purely communistic. The farmer who wanted to join a communal farm organization was supposed to put in whatever property he might possess and all were to share equally in the proceeds. Even in a country which knew little of property ownership this plan did not prove attractive to those who happened to have anything. The peasant who had a cow could not see why he should put that cow into the communal herd and receive no greater share of the general proceeds than the one who had no cow.

In many instances the original plan has been amended, so that allowance is made in the distribution of production for what property a peasant may have put in when he joined. The man with one pig gets a larger share than the man with no pig, while the chap who had two cows is entitled to more than he who only had one. This concession to the right of property ownership, a distinctly non-communistic theory, is justified, of course, as an emergency, but necessarily becomes a precedent to be dealt with in the future.

Again, there is the matter of wages for the workers. The Soviet party has a rigid rule on the pay of its members, and the head of the party himself receives no more than lesser officials. On the construction job we are supervising, work is on the basis of so much a day, but there are some extra inducements offered for speed, so that the efficient worker, finishing his task more quickly than his less-competent fellow, gets additional reward.

In a country whose governmental theory is that all men and women are exactly equal this admission that they are not does not seem quite consistent, but again it is justified on the ground of emergency. Nothing, not even communistic theory, is being permitted to interfere with the working out of the five-year plan.

Recently another striking concession has been made. In the operation of the five-year plan for industrial and farm development there has been work for everybody, and work means wages. Many of the laborers and peasants have earned more actual cash money than they ever expected to see. They have had to save most of it because there has been nothing to spend it for except food and housing and clothing of the plainest sort.

Saving money, with men and women who entirely lack background or experience in money matters, has meant tucking it away on one of the rafters in a farm hut or hiding it in some obscure corner of the one-room city apartment occupied by the family. The government has savings-banks, but the laborer or peasant knows nothing of such institutions and has no faith in them.

Recently the government, to get back into circulation the rapidly increasing amount of currency that has gone into hiding, has instituted a savings-bank campaign not unlike that with which Americans are constantly familiar. Posters and all sorts of propaganda, largely visual, constantly keep before the worker the advantage of letting the government savings-bank take care of his money for him.

Most significant is the fact, reported by a leading news agency, that savings-bank inter-

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est is being paid, just as it is paid in capitalistic countries. The emergency may justify the departure from the tenets of communism, but the fact is that the principle that money is worth a return of its own is simon-pure capitalism and this principle is being taught along with communism in a manner most impressive to the laborer because it affects the return for his own toil.

Ultra-conservatives have directed their fire at the many million dollars of Russian money spent in this country for machinery, materials, and technical services in furtherance of the five-year plan. Some of our conservatives seem to feel that because we cannot indorse in full the manner in which the Soviet rulers have gone about their plans we should refuse to have anything to do with them.

Such a view is too narrow to be sound, either from an economic or a humanitarian standpoint. From an economic standpoint we have only to remember that England, France, and Germany, much closer to Russia geographically than we are and consequently much less immune from the unsettling effect of Russian political propaganda, stand ready to fill any order from Russia which they can get, and in the main are much more willing to extend the credits which Russia needs than are American business men. If we want to say that Russian money is not desirable we can of course refuse to let Russia buy here and thus further retard our own economic recovery. But they would go on buying elsewhere.

Even if our refusal to sell to Russia would make it impossible for them to carry out their industrial and agricultural plans, I would still doubt whether we should refuse, from humanitarian grounds. A great submerged people is being brought from mediæval darkness to some semblance of the light of modern civilizations. Immediate methods or motives are much less important than general results.

No, I am not expecting any clash between Russia and the United States. In fact, during the next few generations I believe that the course of government in these two great countries will become more parallel than divergent. Industrial America is the pattern which Russia is striving to copy to-day. What effect the United States will have on Soviet Russia is fully as interesting a question as how Soviet Russia may affect the United States.

In my opinion we shall see Russia swing more or less to the right as years go on. Our grandchildren or their children are quite likely to find that there is little difference between that country and ours in responsible and responsive government. And we shall have had our share in bringing this about.

What of Death in 1931?

By MABEL S. ULRICH

THREE supreme events are there in every man's existence. *His birth,* of which he fortunately remembers nothing. That it was far more painful and frightening than his death will prove to be, we have every reason to believe. *Creation,* the miracle, which he has learned to accept with considerable casualness. *Death,* the irreconcilable, whose terrors and inevitability he has struggled vainly to evade by a continuous making and remaking of formulas. To-day he no longer chants these formulas with any degree of confidence. Yet the old fear remains. How then shall he square death with his present scheme of things? And can he rid himself at least in part of the poison of this ancient phobia?

A recent article in SCRIBNER'S would lead one to believe that to every human being comes a moment when he is confronted with the realization of his own dissolution. Its author bids us drink deeply of the cup before it is forced upon us, that the ultimate bitterness may be the easier to bear. Is this anticipation, this dividing of our dose into two parts as it were, the only answer that the twentieth century has to offer to a fear which has dogged and embittered life from earliest times?

To those of us for whom the echoes of a pre-war age still reverberate, this period we now live in presents a scene of extraordinary emotional disturbance. We have watched religion's hold fast slipping. We have seen psy-

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chology so "popularized" that complexes, repressions, conflicts are to-day the gossip of dinner tables. The inevitable result is that the every-day man, no longer able to leave his problems with a god, has become daily more self-aware, more conscious, of the essence of his individuality. But psychology is not the only science to have been popularized. Hardly does he begin to sense the significance of his new psychic importance than physics, chemistry, astronomy carry him by longer and longer strides through time and space to show him inescapably his devastating littleness. Here is a conflict, new in the sense that however truly it has been recognized by all great minds of the past, it never before forced itself into the nervous-pattern of the every-day human being. Out of this conflict I believe there must arise an entirely new set of values, and that we shall come to shift radically the emphasis we have heretofore placed on varying human experiences. First of all to go I trust will be the false emphasis we have given to death.

There is ample evidence to the effect that dying itself is a very simple matter indeed. Many witnesses have thus testified, but perhaps none more convincingly than the beloved and honored Sir William Osler. He says: "I have careful records of about five hundred death-beds, studied particularly with reference to the modes of death and the sensations of the dying. The latter alone concerns us here: Ninety suffered bodily pain or distress of one sort or another; eleven showed mental apprehension, two positive terror, one experienced spiritual exaltation, one bitter remorse. The great majority gave no sign one way or the other." Thus does a great physician remove the ancient dread of a painful departure.

But what can we say of that far more insidious fear which springs from the ever-awareness of the death-threat itself—death not alone to oneself but to those one loves? No physician has yet been able to tabulate the extent to which this death-consciousness has seeped into and colored the source of our life-spring. To many it has seemed the supreme tragedy of life. To-day I invited my dog to go with me on my daily walk. Instantly every cell in his body was aquiver with ecstasy. Life at its highest tide flowed through him in a rushing stream of joy. And this glory is his not once or twice in a lifetime, but every day. Of the human family only the very young can know this singing ecstasy of living. Why? A suggestion of Santayana's leaped to my mind. Man, he says in effect, is removed from the lower animals chiefly by the fact that he alone of the animal kingdom must travel with an ever-present consciousness of death.

For centuries upon centuries poor little man has tried to beat off this "death devil" by building up a faith in his personal survival. Yet all history shows how incomplete has been the compensation of heaven. Viewing the widespread belief in the soul's immortality one cannot but be astounded by the little effect such faith has had upon the individual life or social organism. Here again it is impossible not to agree with Doctor Osler. Let me quote him once more: "While accepting a belief in immortality and accepting the phases and forms of the prevailing religion, an immense majority live practically uninfluenced by it, except in so far as it ministers to a wholesale dissonance between the inner and the outer life, and diffuses an atmosphere of general insincerity. A second group, larger perhaps to-day than ever in history, put the supernatural altogether out of man's life, and regard the hereafter as only one of the many inventions he has sought out for himself. A third group, very small and select, lays hold with the anchor of faith upon eternal life as a controlling influence of this one."

This from an address delivered in 1904. After twenty-seven years the groups remain with this difference, that to join the ranks of the second have come the majority of the young, thinking and unthinking. The signs of unbelief are everywhere and he who runs may read them to his own comfort or anxiety according to his convictions and temperament. Whether for right or for wrong, the present generation, the first in this Western world, has freely accepted, without controversy, the prospect of annihilation. This frank dismissal of a faith which, however wavering and ineffectual, has nevertheless been argued for untold centuries, is bound I think to have an effect. What may we expect?

Governments, social groups, businesses, have never been organized with any eye to a life after death. Hence the loss of a personal heaven will in no way affect our outward manner of living. But what of the individual? However indifferent during their normal week-day activity the vast majority may be to their immortality, few indeed have not clung desperately to the straw of their hopes when confronted with disaster to themselves or to those they love. Who can deny that this straw, slight as it may seem, has become a supporting raft to thousands of shipwrecked? What is to take its place?

Annihilation has long been the goal of the

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Oriental mind. But to the Westerner that "one single whole" from which the Buddhist sees his puny life emerging for a painful interval on earth only to return with relief, has little appeal. The Western mind has ever been more curious than mystic. This curiosity has led many far among the stars, but, unlike the Oriental, their hard-wrested knowledge has brought them back to earth with not alone a sense of personal insignificance, but breathlessly exulting that however limited the human mind, it has been able to measure in anthropomorphic terms the vast distances of planets and to chart a map of the unhuman universe. The Western thinker cannot sit quietly and contemplate "Oneness" and Eternity. There is so much life he is still curious about. It is through this curiosity of his that he has been able to slough off hundreds of benumbing fears, and it is this which leads him to discard more and more contemptuously all crutches and adventitious supports. In the past fifty years his seeking has carried him farther than he strode in many centuries previous, and with each discovery the miracle of life becomes more and more urgent, heaven more remote —and relatively less interesting.

For many adventurous seekers, in this fashion has already been comfortably dissolved that "wholesale dissonance between the inner and the outer life" of which Doctor Osler speaks. Inevitably where his kind lead, thousands will follow.

Some less fortunate, the oversensitive as well as the frivolous, must come in increasing numbers to that stoicism which has always been the resource of the gay and giddy and the Marcus Aureliuses alike. Eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die, is the philosophy of frivolity as old as mankind. Endure with dignity is but the other side of the shield. To both these schools are coming daily ever more disciples. But only a few strong egotists will find in dignified stoicism more than a bleak answer to life; while the eat-and-drink school will always have many freshmen but few graduates. They drop out less from ethical prejudice than from the realization that while they may continue to eat and drink, the being merry becomes increasingly difficult.

Thus 1931 offers in exchange for heaven and the fear of death to the scientifically inclined a bracing, zestful curiosity, to the thoughtless and the too-sensitive a less satisfying stoicism. To the artist the years have little new to offer. He needs not now, and never has he needed, a distant heaven or its substitute. He recreates his world as often as he finds it necessary and achieves more nearly than any other both the fulness of life and the fulness of death.

But there still remains the great body of human beings who fall into none of these groups. What of them? Is it too far-fetched a hope that to these when they have forsaken their wavering misty image of heaven there may come a consciousness, lost to humanity since the Golden Age, of the amazing revelance of life? Who can possibly contemplate the new conception of the individual offered us by modern physics and chemistry without being made almost drunk by the stupendous luck, the gorgeous fun of being alive? Man, a mass formed by dancing electrons and protons driven together for an interval to fly apart again into other shapes and combinations; yes, but a mass capable during its instant of infinite combinations of emotions and interests, capacities, scarcely yet dreamed of, for joy, ecstasy, love, work. How easily we might have missed being!

All the newer theories of psychology, of chemistry, of physics, of time itself, all bear witness to this, that *Now* is eternity. When we have fully realized this it must follow that we shall achieve a state of life-awareness in which pain and death, while still inevitable and essential, become only incidental boundaries, much as a line defines a design. Think for a moment if this emphasis on life and now became a general practice, if we learned it at home, at school, at church, how the face of the world would be transfigured. Then even the middle-aged and the ancient would carry with them through the years something of that joy which to-day we see only in young children and in animals. Does this sound fantastic to you? Yet only a few weeks ago a scientist proved that atoms produce a demonstrable chord of music as they dance. Fantastic? Assuredly, as life itself.

Close on the heels of the fear of death crowds the fear of old age to sap the courage and the initiative of the middle years. If we did not see death lurking so near to the aged it is probable that our fears would be less poignant. I am not at all sure that life-insurance companies and banks with their direful warnings have not materially added to a natural dread. But however this may be, here again I am convinced is a man-made bugaboo wholly disproportionate to reality. To twenty-five, fifty seems old and very dull. Vain to tell twenty that you don't really care to play tennis for four hours at a stretch, that you'd rather talk or read than dance the night through.

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Twenty will be sorry for you but will only believe that you are "rationalizing."

Is it not possible that seventy is quite as endurable to seventy as fifty is to fifty? Thus far we have gone, and looking back we admit that every decade has had its own pleasures and compensations. Why then must we think that the progression stops with our present years? At its worst old age cannot last long—not nearly long enough to warrant the fears that it has generated. If accompanied by weakness and what we call senility, then, too, it is accompanied by a diminution in perceptions, emotional and physical alike. Old and feeble persons do not suffer nearly as much as we often think. Senses, imagination, emotions decline together. So much for its worst. But why not gamble on its best? Show me a senile unhappy old man and I can show you a William Welch. Show me a doddering old lady and I can show you a Susan B. Anthony. Every young octogenarian who has lived to work and play for four decades has carried with him through all the years a zest for living which nothing could dim. He has lived with his *Now*—hoarding neither pennies, health, nor friends.

Modern knowledge then offers to the intelligent person to-day a conception of living which is a positive answer to old death fears. Living and dying may indeed both be "accidents," but what of it? Our little earth in this vast universe is but as "a millionth part of a grain of sand." On it are gathered a few tiny creatures like ourselves, all that there is of human life. Extraordinarily, we are here. That we will not be here to-morrow is surely no sadder than that we were not here yesterday. All that matters is that we shall appreciate our luck of the moment to the full.

Poor tormented little spirit of man picking his way through the ages up from the slough and through the jungle to the creating of new fears even as he casts aside the old! Always frightened, yet always he has beheld himself the emperor of the universe. Plants sprung up that he might eat, animals to serve him, the sun for his warmth, the stars for his guidance. True, his faith in his kingship has never been truly serene. Death has threatened him at every stage. He built himself a heaven among the stars and shouted defiantly, "Death, I have conquered you!" the while he looked furtively over his shoulder. Thousands of years pass, and suddenly he is confronted with a new image in his mirror. The stately garments of royalty have been stripped away, and now he seems only forces and energies forming and reforming into living creatures, plants, rocks, stars—a universe of dancing electrons and dancing protons which meet and separate even as he gazes. Yet has his kingship truly gone? No, for he, of all living or dead matter, can see the amazing drama of it, can hear the music of this tremendous ballet. What dream of heaven has ever held marvels to compare with these? Has he lost his soul only to find it?

New Women Make New Styles

By ELIZABETH HAWES

THE women of America spend seven billion dollars a year on ready-made clothes, and neither they nor their husbands know who decides what they are to wear. Now and again they raise up their voices and demand to know who said that evening gowns were to be short last year, long this year. Most of the time they just swear at, or praise, the "dressmaker"—and spend another seven billion.

The New York *Times* printed a letter recently from "Average Woman," who recalled that a year ago protests went up from all over England and America against "the great style upheaval." Clubs were formed to resist styles. "For the first time in history, women were showing fight against the style arbiters. What was the result? Well, the dressmakers won."

The lady says the dressmakers won, and then goes on to state that no one likes fussy, romantic clothes, and that she and her friends simply won't buy the horrid things. She even gets around to blaming the recent depression on the change in styles, and the lack of eager-

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ness to buy them. So, one might imply that, after all, the dressmakers haven't won. But war was certainly declared, and the state of hostility still exists.

"Average Woman," to judge from her letter, has all the earmarks of a war girl. She is doubtless between forty and sixty years of age, and the late war in Europe spelled freedom for her. She was brought up to wear long underdrawers and tight stays. She was buckled into her clothes from the age of twelve. She suffered through wasp waists and learned to hold her skirts in one hand while she swung a tennis-racket with the other. The war girl just missed the fainting period of femininity, and never had a chance to breathe properly after adolescence.

And then came the war. Up went her skirts. Off came her stays. Choking over her first cigarettes, she waved the boys off to Flanders, and rolled another bandage. Some of her friends even got over there, exchanged skirts for trousers, and reeled over France in ambulances.

If Average Woman followed out her present logic, she would be blaming the war on the dressmaker. But her enthusiasm for freedom never gave her time for seriously considering clothes. In 1913 she gasped, and by 1915 she breathed easily. That was all. Now any one would think, to hear Average Woman talk, that she wore clothes because she was told to, and that she wore the kind of clothes she wears because some despotic power dictated them to her.

Perhaps Average Woman would be interested to know that it has been suggested that we end all this trouble caused by clothing by reverting to nakedness. Human nature may grow up to this brilliant suggestion. The instinct for clothing is a primitive one, that of the first big chief who put a feather in his hair so he would look more important than his brethren, combined with the idea that Eve had when she put on a few grape leaves—and intrigued Adam.

Average Woman has probably never paused to consider why she wears clothes at all. When faced with the question she is prone to hedge a little around the word modesty and retreat under the protection theory. She doesn't know that Patagonia is the only country in the world where people dress just to keep warm, that there are tribes of Eskimos flitting over the snow in their bare skins.

Modesty is a term so relative that what is modest in New York at 10 P. M. is considered highly immodest at 10 A. M. A high neck and long sleeves are positively indecent at a formal dinner-party.

Fashion in clothes is just what the majority of people happen to be wearing in one place at one moment, and Average Woman, basicly, is all bothered about clothes because she either wants to get her man, or keep him, or because she wants to be just a little different, and maybe a little better, than Mrs. Brown who lives next door. (Not forgetting how impressed Mr. Brown may be.) One may, with anthropological and psychological soundness, allow Average Woman a slight touch of pure love of decoration, detached from any other motive, and shared with other monkeys.

If, in spite of these facts of life, Average Woman, with her warlike tendencies, wishes to suppress all arbiters of fashion, she should get it straight in her mind just who these frightful people are. Getting rid of them will be a big job. She will have to kill, among others, Best & Co., Greta Garbo, the spirit of Diaghilieff, the Duke of Westminster, all the rich ladies who have nothing to do but buy clothes, all the poor young girls with good figures, and several dozen designers of all nationalities.

Those are the particular "they" who decide about fashion and style. Of the details which make up a mode, there are almost as many creators as there are details. An idea comes, lasts a month, or a season, dies, and is replaced. Now we wear silver foxes with no heads and no tails around our necks, like necklaces. Last year we wore them with heads and tails. Next year we may wear them around our tummies with extra tails all across the front. Last year the furriers simply showed silver foxes as they had been worn for years. This year Schaparelli, Franco-Italian designer, made them into necklaces. Next year the extra tails will have to be disposed of somehow.

These passing fancies are the meringue on the style pie. No one can be certain which will take, or why, or when. There was once, for instance, a young girl from New York who went to Antibes and needed a new sweater. The idea seemed harmless enough at the start. She went to a French department store and found a nice, knitted wool undershirt which answered the purpose. She brought the idea back to New York, and to a department store . . . and now America is overrun with undershirts, woven in every imaginable color, with high necks and low necks, worn by the classes and the masses, for sports. They are generally called "The Antibes Shirt." No one in Paris

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ever heard of them. A single department store put them across, single-handed. They started as a mass style and subsequently turned out to be quite the smartest thing to wear, informally, but with great style, with riding-clothes. . . . "High style."

"High style" is something you don't go in for very heavily if you are a department store. R. H. Macy & Co., for instance, doesn't carry a heavy stock of high-style merchandise. At present high style comes mostly from Paris, although it has been known to happen at Palm Beach and Southampton. It works this way: a Fifth Avenue shop advertised last summer that white hats were very smart in Paris. *Harper's Bazaar* said so, too. Often an advertisement of that sort is based on a bright idea rather than fact. This one happened to be true. Well, a couple of smart women got white hats, but most of them were away in the country, and so Fifth Avenue wasn't littered with white hats. The big department stores weren't sure it was a good idea, so they held off. This spring some one raked out the white hat again. Macy caught fifty smart women wearing them, told the world that every one was doing it, and now they almost are.

Antibes shirts got up to the classes, and white hats got down to the masses. There are class styles which never get down to 14th Street, like "hostess gowns" or "Sunday-night dresses." A woman simply can't get her own supper in a tea-gown, and, besides, Sunday night is a good time for going out, if you live on 14th Street. No one has taken to going out in negligées yet, although with the present impetus being given pajamas, one may expect to find them strolling along Fifth Avenue any night now.

Now and again the masses have their fling without either copying or being copied by the classes. There has been an epidemic of polo coats on Fifth Avenue of late. There is a girl named Greta Garbo who looks nice in a polo coat. She wears it for sport. But when a girl like Garbo looks nice in a polo coat, ladies who wish they looked like Garbo, but doubtless never will, are apt to take up polo coats for everything. The classes have been wearing polo coats for years. They're handy in the country over riding-clothes. But for town *Vogue* says *no*. Garbo goes serenely on her way to the studio . . . and young girls are thriving on them in all cities.

In 1911 Diaghilieff opened the Russian Ballet in Paris, and precipitated turbans onto the unsuspecting heads of the feminine world. We haven't recovered fully from that, and now there is a French Colonial exposition and Agnès is doing her best to turn our headgear in the paths of the French flag. It's just a chance that we aren't all wearing sleeves down to our knees in New York. If Mei Lan Fang had appeared at Roxy's where some smart wholesale lady had seen him, there isn't a doubt but that the Chinese influence would have been severely felt along Broadway.

Still speaking of the meringue of style, the movies have kept up a pretty steady demand for metal cloth, beads, diamonds, and gold lace, things which are quite horrible when bought for $8.75. Movie stars haven't affected the high-style people, but what a movie star wears carries a good deal of weight with the masses. The movie stars seem to be promoting better styles these days . . . or is it that high style has reached the point where it is willing to look anatomy in the face?

Movie stars, like chorus girls, think that a girl can wear what she jolly well feels like. When you have a good figure in the movies or on Broadway, you show it off. If any one in Paris or New York decrees that waists are to be placed at the fattest part of the body, about the hips, and you are a movie star, you just put your waist-line where you are smallest, and thumb your nose at the world.

While Average Woman has been protesting about "dresses that cling tightly about the stomach," other women, less average, have been enjoying that clinging sensation. And some quite nice girls are really delighted that the time has come when they can show off their anatomical structure . . . and remain nice. Average Woman associates tight clothes with tight corsets. She associates natural waist-lines with wasp waists. She thinks long skirts spell petticoats.

These long skirts and natural waists are, of course, the really perplexing problem to Average Woman. The details that die and are replaced, the polo coats, the undershirts for sweaters, the department-store variations, the fact that she wore tweeds because the Duke of Westminster was friendly with a great Parisian designer and introduced her to Scotch tweeds, these things are of minor importance compared to the basic changes. Average Woman wants to know who is forcing her into the long skirt and the high waist.

Average Woman was perfectly happy in the late lamented "chemise" period of feminine dress. She is bemoaning the loss of what came in with the war, clothes which she found easy to jump in and out of, dresses cut like abbreviated nightgowns, slipped on over the head,

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and belted about the hips. She wants back the shortness of skirt which she achieved in 1925, the final degradation, one hopes, in feminine dress of the twentieth century, when one's mother exposed her no-longer-slim legs to the public gaze in a manner which offended to the depths, not one's morals or modesty, but one's æsthetic soul. She is afraid that some one is going to lace her into a tight corset and tie her into a hobble skirt. And in her fright at the thought of the loss of this, her freedom to show her legs and breathe, she has forgotten that she turned herself into a man, with sad results, and is blaming the dressmaker for helping to change the boy back into a woman.

She has forgotten that a whole new generation has grown up since her day, a new generation which craves the dignity of a train, the subtlety of a long skirt. The new generation aren't worried about freedom. They were born with it. They were rushed through school and let out into the world to sink or swim while their mothers drove ambulances. They have tried the rather garish freedom of the war girls, and they want the right to be feminine. A large part of being feminine consists in looking feminine.

Could any one have thought it possible that the feminine breast could fall into such disrepute as it did between 1915 and 1929? Average Woman would be shocked to know that there have been times when perfectly nice women didn't cover their breasts at all, much less deny their very existence. And there were our shameless grandmothers who wore ruffles on their chests . . . if they were so unfortunate as to be flat-chested.

Hips, that outward curve below the waist . . . well, the hip was the waist until last year. That's how the flat-chested girls fixed that. Their stomachs, also, were denied existence, until it will be a wonder if, as a reaction, we don't take to the early Dutch fashion of appearing enceinte at all times.

And then, there was the knee. And there were legs, of all shapes and all sizes, so prominent that the ungraceful things got to be the most obviously female characteristic. It is not strange that some one revolted. Some one decided that women should wear long skirts, and had the temerity to say that hips curve out and breasts are round, even those of nice women.

At first sight, it might appear that that some one was the dressmaker. For it must be admitted that the dressmaker got bored. After years and years of making little chemises with belts, of seeing knees and missing all the lines of female anatomy, he got restless. He began to be restless as long ago as 1925. And he began to insinuate long skirts and fitted dresses into his collection, with little success at first. He hung little pieces down the side of one dress. He hung little pieces down the back of another. Then he cut the dresses a little longer behind. (Notice that the knee was gradually surrounded. It takes a war to change a style overnight.)

There was that younger generation, about four years ago, beginning to be bored with life. There were no more ambulances to drive. The ladies looked the same when they were attired for golf as when they dressed for a gala evening. It was dull. The ladies pored over pictures of their grandmothers, read books and saw plays about the gay nineties, and thought there should be more novelty in life.

There were the little dangling pieces all ready to help them out, and soon they dropped their skirts behind. From there it was but a step to the complete veiling of the knee.

And all the time the ladies were being bored with life and debating over the long skirt, the little girls on Broadway and in Hollywood were discovering something. They discovered they had waists. One day one of them just happened to put her belt up where she was smallest, and her boy-friend loved it. So, being unprejudiced on the subject of anatomy, she has had a waist for years.

The languishing ladies are still a little in doubt as to whether a lady has a waist. Some of them have. Some of them, of course, never will have. But it won't be long before they will all pretend to have.

Just at the moment we are certainly engaged in a great civil war, which could end in a Sartorial Renaissance. The war girls are sticking up for old times, a singularly futile idea. The young girls think it's all a great deal of fun because they have good figures and can wear anything anyway.

The manufacturers, with their usual lack of discrimination, have decided that skirts are long and waists are high. With characteristic enthusiasm, they have plunged the large cities, if not the whole United States, into the worst possible taste. Not content with making long evening clothes, they have produced trailing street models.

Beneath the Greta Garbo polo coat, up into the elevated and down into the subway, trail the newest thing in manufactured taste. At last, after a long decade of being totally unable to tell a woman of discrimination from just

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any one a block away, it is obvious a mile away.

For fashion may be whatever most people are wearing at the moment, but real style, what is known as chic, is what woman chooses or commands. M. Paul Poiret may have chosen to use his genius in creating garments to suit his personal fancy, but the real creator who helps make style, creates to suit his public. He jumps to no conclusions. He has a sixth sense which lets him feel the public pulse a little in advance, through his ladies of taste.

A lady of taste knows her life and the sort of clothes which fit into it. When she plays golf, she will have a short, full skirt, perhaps a trouser skirt. She will not break into trousers until the twentieth-century eye is trained to like bulges. When she goes to work (and there are ladies of taste who work), she will not descend into the subway in a skirt which drags on every dirty step. She will not bother to manage a train when flying into her Rolls Royce to go down-town and get a diamond bracelet. When she wants to hurry, she will be equipped for hurrying.

Along toward tea-time, life slacks up, and she may trail, in her own home, or almost trail, slowly, into some one else's home. Dinner gives a girl a chance to be a real female, trail about and all that, unless one is going on to the theatre. You can't sweep in a theatre without being tripped.

What is more, a lady of taste has studied her figure, and war may come and war may go, but she wears the lines which become her best. In that, she is conservative. What is unbecoming in 1931 might be very becoming to the same figure in 1941. Eyes change, with wars and Russian ballets to train them.

Most American women have managed to be fashionable, without taste. There is nothing which limits the clothing fashions of any period except the life of the people and the stuff available for making these decorations called clothes. The rest is a matter of prejudices. There isn't an arbiter of fashion on earth who can dictate a style to a woman of taste. The arbiters, from Greta Garbo to Chanel, from Best & Co. to Diaghilieff, furnish the imagination, and the women of taste pick and choose what they will. The rest follow.

Credit, however, where credit is due. With all their strange ideas on the suppression of female anatomy, the war girls have left a great heritage. They started a cult for being comfortable. The women of America will have freedom, to breathe and to walk. Average Woman should turn her energy to making a religion of comfort instead of swearing at the dressmaker. She should break down and admit that wearing clothes is just an idea, valuable for covering age, attracting the male sex, and making life more amusing. She might do some valuable work in sneering at unanatomical fashions, which are ugly fashions, and preserving for posterity woman's right to show off her figure in the shape nature intended it to have.

Always, Always

By Daniel Whitehead Hicky

Always, always, it will be thus: the sun
Unfolded like a blinding marigold,
The bright noon's fiery embers swiftly done,
And twilight scattering shadows blue and cold;
April upon the bough and all too brief,
The ripened fruit and leaves that bleed and burn,
Young lovers with their passions and their grief,
Age hoarding dreams like petals in an urn.
Always, always, it has been thus since Time
Unloosed the emerald rhythms of the sea,
Since first the white-winged moon began to climb
The purple night. Beloved, and what are we
But less than the dark quiver of a flower,
We with our little words, our little hour?

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A New Break

By JOSEPHINE HERBST

Bringing artistry to her depiction of types which ordinarily might not seem material for fiction, Miss Herbst makes an engrossing story of the conflicts of Tim and Willa Flaherty with themselves and the community in which they live. This, the twelfth in the series of complete novels in SCRIBNER'S contest, adds another to the fine portraits Miss Herbst's readers have come to expect.

THE two women were in the midst of a very confidential conversation when they heard steps on the porch. The door opened and Timothy Flaherty came in. His hands looked bruised with cold and there was a grimy smear on his cheek.

"Well, they won't get here to-day," he said, looking at Olive Bessemer and avoiding his mother-in-law. "I just came from the last train."

"Didn't he wire?" said Mrs. Mather.

"No, no wire, no nothing," said Tim. "Willa says she wrote him in care of the boat to come right down and she's sure he will. He may have business in New York, but she's sure he'll be here to-morrow. Too bad you aren't home to-night, Mattie, with all that swell food."

Mrs. Mather was to stay at the Bessemers' during Doctor Mather's visit with their daughter Willa. His young second wife would be with him.

"It's a shame to waste that good food on you and that old fool Seidel," she said.

"Oh, I guess not wasted, Mattie," said Tim, grinning at Olive and speaking in the bland tones that were certain to infuriate his mother-in-law. "I wouldn't call it wasted. But I'll run along, it's been one hell of a day. The car broke down twice. And to-morrow up early to meet the first train."

"Too bad about you," said Mattie.

"I'll run along," said Tim.

"Wait, I'll show you down the path with the flash-light; it's pitch dark," said Olive Bessemer. She pulled on a sweater and they went out together. It was very dark with the thick darkness that settles down in the country on moonless nights.

"Say," began Tim. "I'm about fed up on this racket. First we turn ourselves inside out to clean up the place and now we get hysterics running to trains. You'd think it was Jesus Christ. And did you hear Mattie, 'Too bad about you.' I'm just about ready for a show-down with that woman. I'm only waiting until this is over, understand, see."

"Oh, I wouldn't mind anything she says," said Olive.

"I don't as a rule," said Tim. "But she's taken a high hand the last few days ordering me around. Of course it gets under her skin to sit by and see the doctor jazz around with a young wife. But it's her own fault, only that doesn't

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make her feel any the less left out now."

"Listen," said Olive. "Mattie lets on the doctor doesn't dare see her, he still cares so much for her. If you ask me, it's Mattie who is scared to see him with this wife. She's afraid they're happy when she's not."

"Oh, they are. Why, he's tickled to death. She's young, you know, not much older than Willa. He was nuts about Mattie, but he's happy now, you can bet on it. Mattie wouldn't be happy with any one. I tell you, Olive, that woman has an unhappy nature. She's had chances, but she's too arrogant. Her old man is to blame, the old fool, bringing his girls up to think they were lords of creation. The doctor's lucky to have this wife and he's happy, no matter what she thinks."

"Just what I thought," said Olive. "I'll run or she'll think we're talking about her."

"We are," said Tim. He leaned over, his overcoat dragging, tugged at the crank, the car spit and he leaped to the running-board as it slowly moved.

Mattie and Olive were unable to get back into the earnest confidential conversation they were enjoying before Tim's visit. They made a few false starts, but Mattie was a little on her high horse and she also knew that Olive was really on Tim's side. She very much wanted Olive to be on her side and to influence Willa against Tim. In her talk she carefully covered up her real intention. In fact, her real intention was hidden even to herself. She always talked in terms of what was good for Willa and Tim and especially of what was good for the baby. A stranger would think what a helpful, considerate mother-in-law Tim had, and if Tim began unloading his troubles it would be a big surprise.

There was no danger of Olive being taken in and she encouraged Mattie to talk out of curiosity. She had heard Mattie's story in detail from Tim, but Mattie's version was another matter. When Mattie first met Tim as her son-in-law she had some long confidential talks with him about herself. She was very frank and open with him because he had a frank and open countenance and behind his glasses he seemed to take in every word she said. That was before she knew he had a prison record.

Later she became convinced that he would never be able to make a living at anything but stealing. But first she saw him as a nice young man, rather scholarly and inclined to read too much. She knew he wrote occasional articles on reformatories and prison control, but her idea was that this information came from books and study.

When she learned of Tim's past she changed her tune. She was at a crisis in her own life and she could not forgive him for not being a good business man. Her own affairs were crumbling to pieces and she blamed Tim for having the nerve to marry her daughter. For the first time in all her life she turned meddler and tried to break up the marriage in any way she could.

Mattie was no ordinary woman, and the ties between mother and daughter were stronger than is usual. Willa could not believe her eyes that her mother was actually interfering with her life, and when she did, she could not bear to hurt her. Her strong feeling for her mother made it all the harder for herself and Tim. But she had been brought up to think of Mattie as a remarkable woman. At the time of her separation from the doctor, there were no horrid scenes and he had merely given in to what seemed her strong, wayward will. He never understood her sudden aversion to him but he accepted it and always told his boy never to forget his wonderful mother.

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Mattie took a different line with her daughter. She said very little about the doctor, but for years Willa suffered thinking of all the awful things he must have done. Her suspicion kept her from feeling close to her father and it tightened the bond with her mother. She was a youthful, handsome mother and they were more like two sisters. Later Willa found out from her brother that there was nothing dreadful in the background of her father's life. It sobered both the brother and the sister and made them serious about marriage and determined to go slow and never let some little fancy break it up.

The ways that Mattie took to break up the marriage made her seem an interesting woman to Olive Bessemer. Even Tim found her interesting and could sit by the hour picking her to pieces and trying to examine her reasons for certain actions. His theory was that Mattie would have overlooked his past if he had money. His past might shock her but she was used to shocks. But Mattie still kept her childhood faith in money and regular ways of living.

She and Olive called back and forth to one another after they were in bed. It was plain to Olive that Mattie hoped the doctor would take Willa and the baby back with him to Illinois for what Mattie called a good long rest. Willa's doctor in Trenton warned her she must rest or her thyroid trouble might come back again. Mattie's voice from the other room implied that it was hard to rest with a man like Tim to worry about all the time.

In the morning Mattie took up the same subject but soon dropped it. She was nervous and sat near the window looking out. The day went by without a sign of Tim. Late in the evening he turned up, dropped into a chair and said, "No news."

"What do you suppose happened?"

"Couldn't tell you," said Tim. "The boat docked all right and he was on it. I phoned New York this morning."

"Why, he thinks the world of Willa, he's sure to come," said Mattie. Tim was too tired to listen to Mattie's gab and with a tired "So long" to Olive he went home.

"I can't make it out," said Mattie. She puzzled and worried about it all that evening. He must show up when so much depended on him. Mattie knew that Willa was counting on him to help them out with money and she believed Willa deserved it. The doctor had never helped Willa, Mattie had even paid for her education. In those days Mattie had the money to spend. She not only had an income of her own left by her father but she was a whiz at business. Now she was hardly in a position to help herself, let alone any one else. It was hard to see how she had got into such a slump, but business had been so bad that last year in Chicago she was glad to pull out of it alive. She said nothing of the bad investments she had made, for all her boast of being such a good business woman, but Olive knew, and wondered if the situation at the Flahertys' wouldn't be changed if there was money in the bank. A woman like Mattie, used to money, was paralyzed without it, she lost her independence, she was sunk.

The next day went about like the day before and still no news. Phil Bessemer came in about four o'clock from a five weeks' selling trip in the Middle West. Business was slow and the demand for high-class furniture anything but pressing. He was not very keen to see company in the house on his first day home, but he joked with Mattie and kidded her along, and about six Tim came to the door and said not to eat because he was going to the last train. If they didn't come, Willa wanted them to come over

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to help eat the ducks. She couldn't save them any longer.

He was back at eight and they piled into the old Ford. It was a fine frosty night. The sky was black and thick with stars. The cold felt good after the wet drizzle the day before. No one said a word. They were all convinced that the elaborate preparations were all for nothing. For some reason, the doctor was not coming to see them.

The house was lighted up from top to bottom and Willa, hearing the car, came out in her silk dress smiling. When she saw who it was, she stood still and said, "Oh, then he isn't coming." She was ready to cry, they had worked so hard and all for nothing. Nothing would be changed now. She could never bring herself to write her father of conditions. If he had come, he could see for himself, he would have found out that it was a bad thing to have Mattie there and would have thought of some way to end the visit. He would have loaned them money to pull through the winter. Now that was over. She shivered and said, "Well, come on in. We'll enjoy it anyhow."

Inside the house, it was bright, and fruit stood around in baskets. A grand smell came out of the kitchen and Mattie put on an apron and was out opening the oven door in a moment. The old man, Seidel, hearing the noise, came in self-consciously wearing a blue bow tie. He said he didn't understand how a business man like the doctor could be so unbusinesslike as not to send a wire. A business man couldn't go wrong. He was only an old bum and he admired regular living, and Tim's good-heartedness was just wasted on him. Phil Bessemer told Tim it was not only wasted but worse than wasted. Seidel ran Tim down to the local boys and said Tim drank more than was good for him. That's all the thanks Tim got for trying to be easy on the old gent and show him a good time.

Everybody livened up when the food came on the table. Willa brought in a bottle of home-made wine she had been saving for her father. "If he comes now, he'll have to take what's left," she said.

"That's the ticket," said Seidel, "show him his place. Make him take the leavin's." Mattie looked expressively at Olive and said in an aside, "Didn't I tell you?" She was sick of the old fellow with his butting in. Even while the others fed and drank and Tim and Phil made wisecracks, she looked sour and kept her eyes away from Seidel, who did not eat daintily and made loud sucking noises with his coffee.

Tim gave every one a second helping, then sat back and said what was bad luck for one was good luck for another. It was too bad for the doctor to miss all this good food, but lucky for them.

"You take these prison riots. What's the matter with me jumping in and making something of it? I've outlined a few articles, but the way things have been here I haven't had a chance to get at them. I think I'll go into New York to-morrow and see what I can stir up."

Seidel looked mystified, but Phil nodded and said, "That's the stuff, Tim. You ought to get something over on the strength of your experience along those lines."

"You don't deny my experience, do you?" said Tim, grinning.

"Oh, no, no," said Phil, playing along with the idea. "I wouldn't deny anything like that. Why, I'm willing to swear that in your little line you're outstanding and there's many another would swear it to their sorrow."

"Well, I just want you to know I'm a man with a speciality," said Tim.

"You're welcome to my speciality, I'm sick of it. What a lousy business. Dumbbells all day and at night a hotel bed-

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room. And business worse all the time. No one wants high-class furniture when money's tight. And why do they want it anyway? You can search me."

"Don't you like nice things yourself?" said Mattie.

"Listen," said Phil. "I want nothing. Or damned little. If I had my way I'd live on a boat, everything shipshape and no junk around."

"That's the idea," said Tim. He sat back and began, "Now you take most people, understand, see. They own . . ."

"More coffee?" said Mattie. Phil held out his cup and nodded at Tim. "Yes, yes."

"You take most people," said Tim in his slow voice. "They earn money to buy things and then live to take care of what they buy. All they think of is accumulating and what does it get you? It gets you worried and cautious, that's what it gets you. Some have too much and some not enough, but they are all in the same boat so far as real living goes——"

"Who's got a cigarette?" said Olive.

"Let the poor guy talk," said Phil.

"So far as real living goes," said Tim in the same even voice but making it a little louder, "all that counts is more life. Get some fun out of it, live. And what do I mean by living?"

"Yes, just what do you mean?" said Willa.

"Action, he means action," said Phil.

"By living I mean more life, see? Can you get that?"

"You're getting tight, Mister Flaherty," said Willa. "I can see that well enough."

"Tight," said Tim. "Can you beat it? There's a woman for you. They're uncivilized, always trying to repress us."

"Trying to repress you," said Willa. "I wouldn't talk if I were you. There's no man living has more freedom. I'd like to see you stop doing anything you wanted to do."

"The very words," said Phil. "Why they might have come out of the little woman's own mouth. A regular female chorus."

"It's true for you, too," said Olive, "and if I were you I wouldn't develop the subject."

"See, there you are, Tim," said Phil. "Try to begin a little philosophical discussion and they've got you by the tail."

Seidel yipped out a chuckle and poured himself a little drink. "Just a couple of hot shots, that's what you boys are," he said.

The hot shots kept things going until nearly twelve. Seidel removed himself to a chair in the corner and went to sleep and Mattie sat silent and disgusted. For her it was another lost evening. When the Bessemers were leaving, Tim hurried Phil out ahead of Olive.

"Say," Tim said. "I'm going to the city to-morrow and I wondered if you'd lend me ten. I'll have it back to-morrow night, see. I'll be back to-morrow and I'll get the money in town. Christ, I have to. We were counting on Willa's father to tide us over, now he hasn't shown up. I've got to raise it somehow. I'm going in to the Amalgamated for a loan, see, and then I'll get some breathing space for some work."

"Tell you how it is," said Phil. "We're tied up ourselves just now. I bought a lathe too and just paid for it. Business is so bad I can't expect much to come in but I've got ten, you can have it, but don't say anything to Olive. She worries about money and gets all worked up."

"Sure," said Tim. "You'll have it by to-morrow night."

"Oh, sure," said Phil. He switched the lights on in the car and quickly wrote the check. "Careful, it's not dry." Then as the house door opened he called out,

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"Well, success to you to-morrow. For a hot shot there's no such word as fail."

"I'm glad to hear that," said Willa from the door.

"You ought to be," said Tim. He moved out toward the road with the slowly backing car. Phil manœuvred it around and they all waved.

"Did you notice how bad Willa looked?" said Olive as they jerked slowly down the hill.

Tim was up early the next morning, shaved, made coffee, stirred up the furnace, and was out of the house before Mattie came down to plague him about wood. He drove to Lambertville and took the New York train. It was past nine when the train pulled in and he went straight to the bank. They were willing to make him a loan.

The winter before they had loaned him money and he had paid it back with earnings from the wood business. The payment stripped them bare and for a two-week stretch Mattie made pies to sell. Her pies brought fifty cents apiece and she made ten a day. She never let Tim forget that she had stepped in and saved the day. He thought of the pies now as he signed papers for the loan and swore as a big blot spread.

With the check for three hundred in his pocket Tim felt on top of the world. The articles he had considered doing were only by-products, it was time he made a strike for the big thing. God knows there were thousands of crooks in the world, but they couldn't see themselves objectively the way he could. He not only had the career, you might call it, but a background of reading as well. He had several pages started in his typewriter, but they didn't start just right. He did them over and over, he wanted it to be a really big thing. He read and reread the life of Benvenuto Cellini, and he was thrilled at what a life could mean. Thinking of his own life as a book was swell, he could even look back on his five years at Matteawan with a grin.

In a blind pig one night he and a guy from a publishing house had a long talk and Tim opened up with his life story. The fellow said when he was ready to write it to come to him. Tim decided that now was the time to see Maplewood and get something definite on his book. He called up the publishing house and made an appointment, drank several cups of coffee, and full of confidence presented himself. Tim had an earnest, convincing way about him, and after a few kidding remarks came to the point and said, "Now if you weren't too tight that night, you'll remember what I told you about that book I'm doing."

"I remember perfectly," said Maplewood. "I thought at the time you certainly ought to go ahead."

"I've been going ahead," said Tim.

"How much have you done?"

"Well, it's kind of rough, the first draft, but I guess about ten thousand words."

"Fine," said Maplewood. "Why don't you bring it in and let us see it?"

"It's like this," said Tim, leaning forward and lighting a cigarette. "I've got a wife and baby, understand, and her mother's with us, see. I've got to get some jack right away. We had to use some of the old girl's money last winter, see, and that leaves her on our hands until we can pay it back. Now I've got to get some to pay her back and to give me leisure to write. This is going to be a big thing."

"Well, you bring in what you've done and we'll see what we can do."

"I'd have to have five hundred to do anything at all," said Tim, trying to look confident.

"I don't think we could do that. Look here, you haven't a name, you haven't

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written anything yet to show us you can write or that it will get over with the public. But we might give you a certain sum each week to enable you to go on writing. Bring the stuff in and we'll get at it."

Tim was sure he could get ten thousand words together in no time, and he promised to bring what he had finished in a few days. The two men shook hands and Tim went out to hunt up somebody to tell his story to. He was still talking at eight o'clock that night and the last train to Lambertville had gone. There was nothing to do but spend the night, and very late he trailed along home with a couple of newspaper men, all of them happy.

One of the boys fixed up a hot toddy. Tim got his second wind and the centre of the floor. He was in his element. He had a slow, deliberate way of speaking, and if interrupted waited patiently and then went on where he left off. It was hard to think he had been a thief. On second thought, it was very easy to imagine him in action. His head was the head of a nice boy, but his hair was unruly and very thick. His hands gave him away. They were short, the fingers stubby and very strong. They did not go with his kind of a face.

He was anxious to make the boys understand. He wanted them to see what kind of a boy he had been, a very poor boy and bright. Perhaps he read the papers too much. He hung around the ball parks and race-tracks. He certainly saw easy money. His old man was sober and worked like hell all the time, but he never had any easy money. He had religion but no easy money. Tim's first try at easy money put him in a reformatory. He was just a boy and being caught made it a crime.

The reformatory was the best place to learn how to steal. When he got out, he and another kid went right at it. He had learned a few tricks and it wasn't so easy to catch him. He was mad and wanted to bust through the whole works. It wasn't the money. The money went right and left, he never held on to it. He liked to ride in an elevator, and if he saw a poor woman stick a bill in her coat pocket. Sometimes he'd follow her to see if she would find it.

One of the news guys fell asleep. His head dropped on his chest and now and then he snored. Tim hated to cut any of the details but he hurried to his climax. He had been in jails and out of them. It was too much the same tune. His mother died, a couple of his gang were shot or sent up. One jumped from a window getting away and broke his neck. He began to think he had a right to take what he could get. The next time they got him he defied the whole works and stuck to it he wasn't guilty of stealing.

"You see, I had ideas about property then. I stuck to it I wasn't guilty. I said how could I be where everybody did the same I did. I tried to show it was all a swindle, see, and you might be born with lungs and livers but not with property. They didn't know what to do with a nut like that and they put me in Matteawan. Said I was crazy."

"Were you crazy?" said Ingerson.

"Crazy? Hell, no, I wasn't crazy. They found out, at least the doctors did. They were all for me. I held on to myself, see. I had to slow down, to keep calm to stand it. I was captain of the baseball team and we had some good games. It was awful to see the tops of trees over the wall. We made a break one April, three other fellows and myself."

"Were they crazy?"

"No, they'd got there on some technical charge. They'd all three murdered, but they weren't crazy. We could have made it if the car hadn't broken down. Just a little thing like that kept us from

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making it. It was about four in the morning. We'd got as far as Kent. The car stuck in the mud. We got out and put our coats under the wheels, they ground around and we couldn't budge it. We were sweating blood. Then we heard shots and scattered. Two of the guys were killed, I found out afterward. I ducked under a wall. I lay there for hours. They came right past that wall. I thought goddamn, if it hadn't rained. I got to thinking a lot of crazy things. They say Napoleon would have won Waterloo if it hadn't rained."

"That's right, I heard that too," said Ingerson. "He would have been king of the world."

"I didn't dare breathe," said Tim. "The shooting and shouting finally let up and I thought they'd gone for good, understand, but I didn't dare move. I was going to wait until dark, see, and then get across the field. Hours later, I moved a little. I just turned my eyes and standing on the wall not six feet from me was a guard with a gun looking across the field. I was in some brush and I thought if he would just step back off the wall, but, no, he looks down. If he hadn't looked down, I could have got away in the night. But I had to go back for two more years. You bet I had to hold on to myself to stand it. I learned to be hard, all right, I shut myself right up and let it slide over me."

"How'd you come to get out?" The boys were all awake and holding their empty glasses.

"The place was full up," said Tim. "They knew I wasn't crazy, the doctors all knew it. They had to have the space and they let me out." It was almost four o'clock and Tim was the only one who was wide awake. He was excited at his swell story and he knew his book would be a success. He let the other fellows go to bed and he propped himself on two chairs and was soon asleep.

In the morning Tim piled out with the others and made for home. He was full of fine intentions and he was also resolved that Mattie was not going to ride him any more. He had work to do and it was hands off for Mattie. She was in the yard hanging up the baby's diapers when he drove into the yard. Her nose was blue and she began right off. "It's a pretty note to go off and leave me without wood for the stove, and how about the baby's milk?"

"Listen," said Tim impressively. "No more of that kind of talk, see. If you don't like it here, you know what you can do." He stalked into the house and looked around for Willa. She was lying on the couch.

"I've been awfully worried," said Willa. "It was more because I didn't dare say a word. Mamma has been carrying on bad enough as it is."

"I've got good news," said Tim, sitting beside her. "Listen, kid, I got the three hundred dollars and a fellow is going to give me an advance on my book. All he wants is to see some of it. It's all lined up in my head and I've been working out my material and will get right down to brass tacks. I'll take him the first few chapters next week. How's that?"

"That's just grand," said Willa. "You're a good boy."

"You bet I'm good. Listen, everything is going to be all right. The thing is to keep calm. Leave Mattie to me. I'm going to have a show-down."

"Don't be cruel," said Willa. "She makes me frightened always hinting at suicide."

"Do you want to know what to do with that kind? Just hand her a rope and tell her she'll find a good stout peg in the barn. That will be the last you'll hear of suicide."

That evening Tim brought his typewriter down-stairs where it was warm

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and began pecking away. But Mattie kept running in and out of the room and shaking up the furnace and yelling where's the dish-mop, Willa, and did you put the baby's cereal over, so that very little was accomplished. He sat there after they had gone to bed, just sat and dreamed about his book and what a wow it would be and how it would sell and they would buy a car and tour the country and Mattie would go away and never get a chance to come back again. Finally, he fell asleep sitting there and woke with a horrible jerk like a guy being hanged with his head slumped down on his chest. It was four in the morning and the house was cold as a stone. He shivered and went upstairs in his stocking feet to bed.

Every day he tried to work. He sat for a long time in front of the typewriter and typed and retyped what he had done the day before. It was slow work. He had no idea it would be so hard. It was easy to talk it, but to write it was something different. Mattie made it as hard as she could. She had no faith and poohooed the whole scheme. She said if he thought he could make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, he'd be fooled.

She was uneasy thinking he might really succeed and that her friends back in Illinois would read it and know the kind of man Willa had married. Tim tried not to pay attention to her clattering around, but her buzzing was always there and he found himself waiting for the next sting. He had no place to write except the big, open living-room. The baby played around him and Willa and Mattie talked back and forth.

Gradually Tim began working at night after they were all in bed. The house was quiet and he sat enjoying himself, planning what he would say. He wanted his book to be a challenge and a warning. It would show up the hypocrisy that taught children to value only money and then punished them for grabbing it any way they could. He wasn't going to make that mistake with his own kid. Give him fun and fresh air, but smack his hands if they stole cookies from the grocer. Tim sat there, night after night, drinking coffee and smoking, figuring and dreaming, and now and then he actually wrote off a few pages.

His new habits pleased Mattie. This way, he slept until twelve or one o'clock. Then he took the car and shopped for the house and sometimes he stayed away until evening. The doctor had ordered a complete rest for Willa. She lay on the couch all day and refused to worry. The doctor had warned her to avoid all excitement and she tried not to wonder where Tim was when he disappeared for hours. She was even relieved when he began sitting up so late and sleeping in the daytime. It was no fun to sleep together any more.

The walls of their room were so thin, she was uncomfortable with her mother so near, and Mattie seemed to keep an automatic watch on them in her sleep. If they so much as stirred, Mattie coughed to show she was awake, or bounced out of bed on the pretense of changing the baby. Mattie was like a hand between them all the time. It was all spoiled, she only lived for when Mattie would be gone. The doctor had ordered her to sleep alone anyhow, so there was little to regret. If Tim could get enough money together, there was a chance it might work out for the best.

It was early December. The snow began to fall and lay on the ground for days without melting. On the hill back of the house the cedars looked very green against the snow. Seidel was still sticking around. Now and then he cut some wood, he did a little cement work by the cellar door, but most of the time he pestered Tim for booze. If he heard a

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car come up the hill and the Bessemers called, Seidel walked into the house as if he owned it. Tim determined to tell him to clear out before it got much colder, and he got Phil to donate an old pair of shoes and an overcoat. The old clothes were in the kitchen but Tim couldn't seem to get around to tell Seidel to beat it.

About two weeks before Christmas Tim managed to get together about twenty pages of his book and he shot into New York with it. Tim wasn't without friends. He had bummed around New York for years, and the year before selling fireplace wood to houses around Eighth Street he made the acquaintance of a good many newspaper men and men in the publishing game. The newspaper fellows especially were full of ideas on how to write. The advice he liked best was to tell the story. He thought when it came to analyzing it, that was all anybody did anyhow.

Tim was not surprised when the publishers liked his stuff and agreed to pay him thirty-five dollars every week. He took it easy and went home and decided to relax for a few days after his success. He and Seidel went to Ellie's and bought up several quarts of pretty raw booze. Ellie sold the stuff to the fellows on farms around and she never let it age, she couldn't afford to. Seidel and Tim went on the tear and they kept it up for two days. The third day Tim was sick of Seidel.

He drove off early in the morning and showed up at the Bessemers'. Phil was home and fixing his barn for a workroom. His aim was to get off the road eventually and to make furniture himself, out of old wood, after antique models. He had orders for corner cupboards already and he was more interested in doing something like that, if he could make a go of it, than in being a high-powered salesman.

Olive saw Tim drive up. The two men talked together, then drove off without a word. It was a mild day and neither of them wore a hat. Olive was completely mystified. They didn't turn up for lunch, and the afternoon wore on. It was very dark at seven. Olive tried to eat but the food stuck in her throat. Perhaps they had had an accident. She thought Tim might have some excuse for drinking, but what excuse did Phil have? She was boiling mad and she felt sick about it too. Not to tell her, to let her sit wondering. She waited until half past nine. It was a dark night and she lit a lantern. The back road to Flaherty's was slushy and she went ankle deep into the mud. When she saw lights in the Flahertys' house she hoped Phil would be there. She tried to keep cool but her walk was more like a stalk as she entered their kitchen.

"Do you know where Phil is?" she began.

"No, Tim's gone, I thought he'd be back before this," said Willa.

"I bet they're somewhere drinking," said Olive. She was very excited and she held her lighted lantern with no idea of putting it out. "I wouldn't care if they had told me, but to say nothing, it's too much."

Willa looked at her warningly and as soon as Mattie went to the kitchen she said in a whisper, "I'm sick about it too, but I can't say a word before Mattie, she'd use it against Tim and we'd never hear the last of it. I have to pretend it's all right."

Olive put out the lantern but she couldn't quiet herself. She rocked and said was it possible they were in an accident, what kept them, and finally she said she wasn't going to stand for it. She didn't intend to say so much on account

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Appointment at Five

By LEANE ZUGSMITH

THE rain followed her into the vestibule. As she closed the door behind her, she noticed a large-faced, middle-aged man putting his umbrella into the stand.

"Nasty weather," the man said cheerfully.

"Very," she replied, stooping to take off her overshoes.

The man opened the inner door for her.

"Please don't bother," she said. "I've got to take these things off."

"Don't tell the doctor," he said, still holding the door. "I'm going in with mine."

She passed into the waiting-room. No one was there. She sat on the couch. The man took off his coat. He sat in the big chair in the corner.

"Don't know why they keep it so warm in here," he said.

"It is warm."

He went to the window and opened it.

"That's better, isn't it?" he asked as he sat down.

"Yes," said Ruth.

She smiled faintly, unbuckling her wide silver bracelet and buckling it again. The man arose and walked toward the window he had just opened.

"Hope it's not raining in," he said.

She looked up. The man turned away from the window.

"It's all right." He laughed. "Guess only old bachelors and old maids bother about that sort of thing."

"Oh, no," said Ruth politely, "it's just the instinct of the householder. Now if you lived in a hotel . . ." She gestured.

"That's it," he agreed. "People who live in hotels are terribly careless of other people's property. You can always tell the man who wipes his shoes on a towel."

"Yes, I guess so."

"Why, I wouldn't live in a hotel for anything. My mother's kept house for me forty-five years. If I had to live in a hotel, well——"

"It would be pretty dreary." She unbuckled her bracelet and snapped it to once more.

"Funny to see Doc's place so empty. I guess most of his patients left town for the holidays. My mother always goes to the seashore at Easter-time. Well, this year I wouldn't let her go. She's in poor health—I'm not here for myself; I'm here to see the doctor about her. And I just told her she couldn't go down in that crowd around the hotels.

"My mother went down last year with another lady of her own age. She always goes to the same hotel. Why, in the evening they could hardly find a place to sit in the lobby. And then girls would pass by smoking, and some of the ashes would fall right in their laps. Well, now, my mother's not so young any more. So I just told her she could go down any time she wanted except around the holidays."

"I think you were right."

"Yes, I've got some feeling about her. Funny the way the world is now about

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parents. I know a man that's called a good son because he sends his mother ten thousand a year. But he don't have time to see her, not even when she comes to visit him. And that's the son of to-day!"

"Well," said the girl, "I'm sorry for the mother, but I'm sorry for the son, too, in a way. After all, he's doing what he thinks will make her happy. It's sort of sad to think of his not knowing that something besides money will make people happy, don't you think so?"

"No, I don't. He's a selfish man. But perhaps"—he looked at her triumphantly—"you think the present attitude to parents is all right. I could tell you any number of cases like that. Any number!"

"I could match you with any number of cases where parents exploit their children, where it's better for parents not to see their children—better for the children, I mean."

"Ah! I know, the children should all be put into institutions. That's interesting. Who was it— I was reading about some Frenchman who thought the way you do. Rousseau, was it Rousseau?"

"I don't know."

"Ye-es, I was reading about him. He married his servant-girl, and they had five children, and he popped them all into an institution. Is that what you would do?"

She snapped the buckle of her bracelet. "If I start, we'll get into an awfully long argument. Really, I'd rather not start."

"Well, why not? We don't know each other. You don't know who I am and I don't know who you are. Tell me what you think."

"I wouldn't put the children in an institution, but I'd certainly let them live their own lives. I think that most children are—well, sacrificed because they're afraid to break away from home. And they never really break away. They marry people like their parents, and they keep on living the same kind of lives until they die. The boys are Republicans because their fathers are Republicans; and the girls have stewed chicken on Wednesday nights because their mothers always did!"

"Then I guess you think the way young folks nowadays neglect their parents is all right? Stay away for months, never once think of going to see them!"

"Well, I don't see why a child is supposed to love his parents just because they're his father and mother. I think my parents are nice people. Father never made a friend of me. I have a tenderness for mother. But I could never live at home with them again, because they don't really interest me. And I don't really interest them—as anything but their child. Which really means, I guess, somebody whose inside life belongs to them. Well, I won't let my inside life belong to any one but myself. And that's the way it should be!"

"Ah!" His voice was bland and provoking.

"But it's so foolish," she said, "for us to get into an argument like this. Really, I didn't have any idea of——"

"We're not arguing, my dear young lady. I'm extremely interested in hearing the views of—ah—one who feels it isn't necessary to treat one's mother and father with love and respect——"

"I don't think you understand me at all. I just think love for your parents should be something honest and really deserved—by them, I mean—instead of a tradition. I've no doubt that you feel a very sincere love for your mother, but lots of children think they love their parents because they've been taught that you always do. All I say is that I'm one of the honest ones. . . . And I can't be a hypocrite—no, what I mean is I'm not a parasite, either. I work. I support myself."

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As the man was about to speak, a nurse appeared at the door. "The doctor can see you," she said.

The man bowed toward the girl. "You're first," he said.

She arose. "Sorry we got into that argument."

"It was most interesting," he replied.

She followed the nurse into the doctor's office. He was sitting behind a large desk. He was a yellowish man with pouched bags beneath his eyes. She had seen him once before. He remembered her.

"How do you do, Miss Miller," he said.

"How do you do, Doctor Lang."

The nurse disappeared.

"Just the same?" he asked.

"Just the same."

He sorted some cards on his desk, looked at one. "Ah, here," he said. "Ruth Miller. Um. Well, just go into the other room. I'll be in as soon as you're ready."

After he had come in, she kept her eyes fixed on the glass-enclosed cabinet to her right. Shelf upon shelf of curious instruments. Strange little knives; sharp little knives. All to cut away painful flesh. There were things more resisting than flesh . . . and no knives were needed. She knew.

There had been no knife a week ago. Hardly more than a word. *Basta!* Enough! As a matter of fact, he had said many words:

"I want to be honest with you . . . terribly fond of you . . . memories always beautiful ones . . . hardly believe I was capable of falling in love . . . must know her, you'll love her, too . . . always think of you as one of the most charming . . ."

She had not heard everything he had said. Because it could all be reduced to that one word that she had read somewhere in some book, when an Italian countess had broken off with her lover. The woman had sent back to him all his gifts and letters with a scrawled word: *"Basta!"*

Well, she had expected Roger to end it some day. If he had left it to her, it might have gone on forever. . . .

The doctor spoke. His back was turned; he was putting some instruments into the sterilizer.

"I'm certain now. You are three months pregnant."

She sat up slowly. "I see," she said.

The doctor left the room.

When she walked into the outer office, he was sitting behind his big desk, balancing a paper-knife in his hand. She stood opposite him.

The doctor raised his eyes. The bags beneath them were very pouched. He cleared his voice.

"Well," he said angrily, "won't this man marry you?" The paper-knife slid with a bang to the floor. He stooped to pick it up.

"No. He—I wouldn't want," she said, "to marry him under these—the circumstances."

The doctor grunted. The rain beat against the windows. He balanced the paper-knife carefully.

"Well, what are going to do?" he asked irritably.

The girl walked around to the side of his desk and sat down in a chair. "I thought perhaps—maybe—you could give me some address," she said.

He looked at her for a moment. Then he asked: "Did you really think I dealt in addresses of that kind?"

"No. I didn't think you did." She looked at her bracelet, started to snap the buckle, stopped, and looked up at him.

"I don't." His voice was more gruff than before. He pulled a pad of paper toward him and scribbled a name and address on it.

"Here! I guess this is the doctor you want."

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She took the slip of paper and arose. "Thank you. I'm grateful."

As she walked toward the door, he spoke again. "I suppose you have some one who'll look out for you—go with you there, and all that sort of thing?" His gaze was concentrated on the exact balancing of the paper-knife.

"Oh, yes," she said quickly, and rushed out of the door.

The paper-knife fell again with a bang.

In the vestibule she stood for a moment, staring absently at her overshoes. They were still wet, and looked so suddenly forlorn that she could not bear to put them on. She pulled her umbrella out of the stand. She would leave the overshoes. It was raining too hard, anyway, for anything but a taxi. Perhaps her middle-aged friend could take the overshoes home with him. For his mother. He probably brought home gifts for her with regularity. A box of drug-store candy. A bag of fruit. A book. "Guess what I have for you, mother!" And he would pull out of his pockets the wet, forlorn overshoes. "My son!"

Ruth began to laugh.

She waited at the curb for a cab. But when she had seated herself inside, she did not know where to direct the driver. For a foolish moment she stared at the chauffeur as he waited for her to speak.

"Yes. Let me see. Oh, some department store, I guess. On Fifth."

She could use a telephone there. That was the chief thing at the moment. And it was too long a way to her room. Too far to go in a taxi. Cabs were an extravagance now.

Anyway, her room would be dismal. The rain would beat gray against the window-panes. And the fog-horns would whine along the river. Of course she could build a fire in the fireplace. That was the joy of a real wood-burning fireplace, the agent had told her when she had rented the room; it made a room so cozy and cheerful. But, somehow, she had never thought it much satisfaction to build a fire just for yourself. A fire needed two people. It was like playing cribbage with yourself. Roger and she had played cribbage before the fire quite often. Whenever she played with the red pegs, she had won. It was curious.

Would it rain like this all April? "April is the cruelest month, breeding lilacs out of the dead land." Or was it dead lilacs out of the rain? From that book (what was it called?) that Roger had lent her; but she had lost it at lunch at the Happiness, trying to memorize a little of it over a tongue sandwich and a chocolate ice-cream soda. It had been raining then, too, for in remembering to take her umbrella, she had forgotten the book. They had never found it for her. She had been afraid to tell Roger—and unable to buy him another because—what *was* its name?

Perhaps she should send him back all his books; perhaps he would want his letters ("Girl Sues Prominent Advertising Man. The letters were read in court: 'Darling Bootsie' ") and the leather cribbage-board that folded and the lighter. The evening he had brought her the lighter was the time he had at last answered: "Yes, I love you . . . in a way." In a way. She had ignored his qualification, for it was the first time he had ever said "I love you." Always before that: "You know I'm terribly fond of you." Terribly fond of her. "What do you mean by 'fond'?" she had once asked. For vocabularies were so different, and what he meant by fondness might be what another meant by love. He had said that being fond was—well, he was fond of Dorothy, of Elinor, of Mrs. Boldt, of Sis, and of Miss Barbour, his secretary. April is the cruelest month . . .

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The metre said sixty-five cents. Plus ten for the tip: seventy-five. That left only a quarter in change. Well, the doorman, big as he was, and big as his umbrella was, would get nothing. Perhaps he'd think she would tip him when she left the store.

At the fifth floor she got out of the elevator and walked back to the rest-room. It was crowded with women. There was a smell of rubber and wet umbrellas.

Even the telephone-booths were all occupied. She looked at the slip Doctor Lang had given her as she opened the telephone-book. The pages always seemed to fall apart to the Ho's, and there it stood out for her—Horton, Roger, 22 East . . . but it was an address and a telephone-number that she knew better than her own. And would it be as easy to forget as to learn?

She had not known that number by heart the day she had walked up Lexington Avenue two years ago (all of that? Of course, twenty-two in 1927), wondering if Roger Horton would ever call her. Three weeks before he had told her: "We can't go on seeing each other this way. You draw me too much. We can't . . . unless—" So she had known that if she saw him again, it meant surrender.

But going into the drug-store on the corner of 64th for a Coty refill, the telephone-booth, empty, so inviting—and the telephone-book had been open on the shelf. She had looked at the open telephone-book. Open to the Ho's. It had been an omen. By this token I am yours. And she had said over the telephone, primly: "This is Ruth. I called to ask the name of that book we were talking about the last time we dined together." "You funny little thing," he had replied. . . .

She turned the pages of the telephone-book quickly. There was the number she really wanted. At least, he wasn't afraid to have his name in the book. Probably a very reputable doctor with a gray beard who would ask her, too, in an angry voice if the man wouldn't marry her.

She moved away and stood outside one of the telephone-booths, waiting. A woman's emphatic voice spilled itself in fragments from the little enclosure. Her voice punctuated itself with large capitals and firm periods.

" . . . if Junior coughs Once more, put him Right to bed. . . .

"Well, don't let him play in a Draught. Put him in My room if it's Warmer. . . ."

"That's right. And Katie. Katie. If Mr. Felsenthal calls, tell him that we've got Pot-roast for supper. And if he's Late, it will be Spoiled again."

The woman moved majestically out of the booth, and Ruth slipped into it. She called her number.

"Hello," said a cold woman's voice.

"This—this—Doctor Lang gave me your address. Could I come to see the doctor soon?"

"Who gave it to you?"

"Doctor Lang, but I think he'd rather I didn't say——"

"Wait a minute."

The woman's voice could be heard again. "We'll give you an appointment in an hour. Five o'clock."

"All right. I'll be there in an hour. Good-by."

There was no place to sit down. She went into the inner waiting-room, powdered her face, and combed her short hair. Came out. There was yet no vacant place. She leaned against the wall.

Rows of young girls lounging in divans, smoking, coloring their lips, chattering. ". . . all she wanted us to know was that he'd taken her to a show, not a movie. Can you tie that?"

All the booths filled with emphatic women telephoning home about Junior's Cough. There was one empty

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booth. She might go in and telephone to some one. To whom? There was no one. No, not one. There should be many Felsenthals in the directory. She might call up one, and ask for Mr. Felsenthal. "Hello, Mr. Felsenthal, we have Pot-roast to-night, so don't be late for supper, or it'll be Spoiled."

Women with little smiles, writing at desks. The one opposite her moved her lips as she wrote. "Dearest . . . dearest . . . dearest." All the women in the place writing to Dearest, or telephoning to Dearest, or telling the other one about Dearest.

And that dream had shaken her out of sleep again last night. She thought she should be free of it—now. But it had visited her again, for at least the tenth time. Mother walking in the door of her room . . . at night . . . seeing her with Roger there . . . seeing . . . Once Roger had awakened her out of the same dream with a kiss, and she had told it to him, still under its spell. "Too simple for Freud," he had said.

"But it comes again and again. A bad dream."

"I know. It's your Puritan heritage, you funny little child."

Those were the times—the first year—when he could not bear to leave her until morning. The second year he had told her that he thought it better if he went back to his own apartment to sleep. "Both of us fresher for work in the morning, too." It had almost made her cry when first he told her. She had never cried before Roger. Men didn't like tears. What would Roger have done if she had cried? Accused her of heroics, or—? Well, she had never cried before him. . . .

The woman whose lips moved as she wrote sealed her letter, stamped it, and left the desk. Ruth sat down there. It was nice to sit down. She was a little tired. Sheets of store stationery lay scattered before her. Mechanically she piled them in a corner of the desk. Too bad she had no cigarettes. . . . Some women were casting hostile glances at her. Did they resent her monopolizing a desk while they actually had letters to write? She unbuckled her silver bracelet, buckled it, and thought of smiling with dignity at those women and saying:

"You see, I have been standing for quite a little while. And since there was no other place to sit . . . And I am a bit tired.

"Anyway," she might add, "I won't be here long. I have an appointment at five."

That remark wouldn't be a success, for it was now—she looked at the clock on the wall—only quarter past four. And it would take only twenty minutes, at the most, to get to that address. Yes, no more than twenty minutes, even in this slippery weather.

One of the women glared. And, of course, she couldn't say what she had planned. That had just been for fun, like leaving the overshoes for the middle-aged man, and planning to call a Mr. Felsenthal.

With the air of one about to compose an important document, she carefully chose a sheet of note-paper, dipped a pen into the ink-well, and looked off into the distance. Neatly she wrote the date.

Then, almost by itself, the pen continued to write.

"DEAREST MOTHER:

"It is raining pitchforks today, and it makes me think of pleasanter weather—the sunny days in the garden at home that summer I spent with you three years ago. Also it reminds me that it's been an awfully long time since I've written to you or Father. And I'm really sorry.

"So many silly little things seem to come up, nothing important, and yet it

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keeps me from doing the things I want to do. Such as write to you. Really, Mother dearest, today I want to write to you more than anything in the world. You know, in spite of all the loyal, devoted friends I've made here—well, what I mean is that you really love me, even though I am a neglectful daughter. And it's an awfully nice feeling to be writing to some one who loves you, even though I have nothing in particular to say.

"I'm planning to do more than write to you. I'm planning to get a few days off at the office and come home. I don't know exactly when it will be, though, because I have sort of a little cold, and I may have to take a few days off to get rid of it. But if I do have to take a few days off now, I'll make up the work as soon as I can, and try to get home, if it's only for two days.

"Then I won't seem like such a neglectful child, will I? I've been wondering for a long time why most parents really give their children much more love than their children give them. And, do you know, I think it's because of some instinct to give your love forward. What I mean is that the children don't give as much love backward to their parents, because they're storing it up to give forward to their children.

"Of course, that idea wouldn't apply to me if I never get married and have children. Now I know just what you're saying. You're sort of sniffing and saying: 'What! A nice girl like our Ruth not get married? She's had any number of chances.'

"But chances don't mean so much. There's love. And it's not always so easy to fall in love again. Of course, by 'again,' I don't mean exactly that. You know what it means when I say 'in love.' I've probably never been in love. But the sort of crushes I used to have at home, like the time Danny kissed me at the New Year's Ball. Didn't I think I was in love then? Anyway, I do remember confessing to you that he'd kissed me, and you were awfully sweet about it.

"But, really, I'm rattling on at a great rate. The important thing is that I'm coming home for a few days, as soon as I can make it. Then we can have one of our good old talks. You must tell me all about the bridge parties you've been going to, and I'll tell you all about the funny little politics at the office and what they're wearing here and the plots of all the plays I've seen.

"I've really seen a lot of plays this year. I don't think I'll be going to many more. You can get awfully tired of going to theatres and parties and things. It's very nice just to sit alone in my room and read. I make a fire, you know, and it's so cozy and cheerful——"

But looking up, she caught sight of the clock. Quarter to five! It couldn't be! She crumpled the letter into her pocket, grabbed her umbrella, and dashed toward the elevators. It was still raining when she reached the store vestibule.

In forthcoming issues of the Magazine will appear such outstanding articles as "The End of the Jazz Age," by Scott Fitzgerald; "Stalin Retreats," by Isaac Don Levine; "Can One Be Christian and Free?" by Clarence C. Little; "Are We Standardized?" by Margaret Mead, and others by Frank R. Kent, V. F. Calverton, Christian Gauss, William Harlan Hale, and Anne Hard.

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I Like to Think of Us

By CHARLES NORMAN

The sun brightens the street, and I wake
And peer through the window like a child
Without dolls, and I confess this country
Frightens me, there are such people in it.
And I think of you. You are what I
Have thought about and little else for years
So beautiful; and all the trite words are
Suddenly true, suddenly beautiful.
And a wind hesitates in the street
At nightfall, the street quietly assumes
Lamps and glamorous windows and the dark
Is beautiful with things vaguely something
And you are in my mind like music. I
Think of you and all the trite words sing.

Or I sleep. And the city is not still
The trucks go by, the wind is there, the lamps
Throng the city, and there were nights like this
Often in Paris. And where you are now
It is like that, and a wind takes the street,
The lamps hesitate, far heels ring out
On stone. I think of you instead of God
And make my prayer that all is well with you.
And then I wake and know you are not there;
The long day glitters at the end of streets,
And night comes lonely. Who would wish to be
Despite the lamps that glimmer in the dark
Alone at night when you are in the world?
I like to think of us when you were here.

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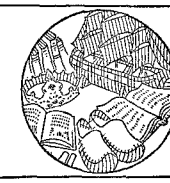
As I Like It

By WILLIAM LYON PHELPS



THE following letter from Thomas Jefferson is here printed in full for the first time. It was communicated to my friend Mr. Charles P. Howland of New Haven, by Mrs. G. H. Wright, of New Milford, Conn. On applying to her for permission to print it in SCRIBNER'S, she graciously granted my request, but added that a quotation from it was used by the liberal leader, Professor Charles A. Beard, in an address that he made in the Middle West; and this quotation was repeated by one or two others, including Judge Brandeis. As it seems to me that this letter is more needed now than at any previous time in our history, and as, to the best of my knowledge, it has not been printed completely, and is certainly not widely known, here it is:

Thomas Jefferson returns his thanks to Mr. Boardman for Mr. Griswold's sermon on religious freedom, inclosed in his letter of the 18th of June. He had before received it through another channel and had read with great satisfaction the demonstrative truths it contains. To the 10th and 11th pages, however, he could not assent; and supposes that the respectable and able author, finding himself supported by the good sense of his countrymen, as far as he has gone will see that he may safely, in this point also, go the whole length of sound principle; that he will consequently retract the admission that the utterance of an opinion is an overt act, and, if evidently immoral, may be punished by law; of which evidence, too, *conscience* is made the umpire. The conscience of the judge then becomes the standard of morality, and the law is to punish what squares not that standard. The line is to be drawn by that; it will vary with the varying consciences of the same or of different judges and will totally prostrate the rights of conscience in others.

But we have nothing to fear from the demoralizing reasonings of some, if others are left free to demonstrate their errors. And especially when the law stands ready to punish the first criminal *act* produced by the false reasoning. These are safer correctives than the conscience of a judge.

He prays Mr. Boardman to accept his salutations and respect.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

July 3, 1801.

It is an interesting fact, in view of the prodigious increase in freedom of manners and morals during the last fifty years, that in freedom of thought and speech in political affairs we are worse off than we were in the strait-laced Victorian days. In those times, which seem so ridiculous to many of our young people in 1931, John Stuart Mill published his essay on "Liberty," which ought to be read and reread to-day, for it is far in advance of our contemporary organized public opinion. Our enlightened twentieth century saw more "political prisoners" in American jails and Federal prisons than one could have imagined in the nineteenth century. Toward the close of that century, Professor William Graham Sumner of Yale, in the midst of the war of 1898, delivered a public lecture called "The Conquest of the United States by Spain," which the curious may find in his "Works" collected by his ablest pupil, Professor A. G. Keller. That lecture made a rumpus, as it was meant to do; but Sumner kept his professorship and went on teaching, until he was retired by the age limit in 1909.

Two years later, during the Boer War in England, public speeches were made against it by Lloyd George, G. K. Chesterton, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, and others; while William Watson wrote a magnificent anti-imperialistic poem. These men were of course at-

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tacked, but two of them subsequently became prime ministers, and all Mr. Chesterton lost was his watch, which somebody stole in the racket, and which by the way he has never replaced, being too busy to consult a time-piece.

The suppression of freedom of thought and of speech, which was believed to be necessary in America during the World War, continued after the war was over, and is to-day one of its numerous tragic legacies; we read frequently in the newspapers of acts of violence, of deportations, of other measures for the suppression of opinion. But to those who are familiar with the history of human thought, it is clear that these methods of extinguishing liberty—however disastrous they may be to the health and prosperity of unfortunate individuals—only increase the strength and numbers of the opposition. For perhaps the most sublime thing about men and women is this—they will not submit to a forcible clamp on their minds and consciences.

There is no doubt that many of those who believe in the suppression of individual liberty are actuated by good motives, and not by wanton cruelty. But even if the organized majority were always right and the unorganized minority always wrong, the method of suppression by force is unwise and inexpedient.

Woodrow Wilson was surely a greater statesman and a better man than Warren Harding; yet, after the war was over, it was Wilson who deliberately kept Eugene Debs in prison and it was Harding who released him. I mention this because it proves that those who are opposed to freedom of thought are sometimes "great and good"; but in this instance, if history proves anything, it proves them to be mistaken.

F. P. A., the columnist of the New York *Herald Tribune,* whose humor is equalled by his common sense, says that if the country wishes preparedness, it had better begin now to enlarge its prisons, as during the next war the number of conscientious objectors will reach a "new high."

Fifty years ago, while I was reading the admirable series of biographies edited by that able scholar John T. Morse, Jr. (happily still living and active at the age of ninety-one), I imagined that the reputation of Thomas Jefferson had suffered damage from which recovery was impossible. But whatever mistakes Jefferson made and whatever mistakes he would have made had not John Marshall prevented them, Jefferson's reputation in these latter days has risen to a new level. For his belief in education and in human freedom is seen now, by the discerning, to be the mark of a great and far-seeing mind; America needs Jefferson *now* as in his own time she needed his political opponent, Hamilton.

In the early years of our country, the Supreme Court, headed by John Marshall, was the conservative protector of what was absolutely essential to our endurance as a nation—federal power, centralization. For many years statesmen looked to the Supreme Court to protect and maintain the Constitution against possible radical and dangerous legislation.

To-day the situation is exactly the other way. We are beginning to see that the cause of individual liberty, constantly in danger from legislative and executive acts, and even more from public opinion, must look to our courts as its sole refuge and its only hope. Such a federal judge as Learned Hand is one of the most valuable citizens in America. His learning, his wisdom, his courage, have repeatedly been shown in decisions in which he has maintained the rights of the individual to freedom of thought and speech.

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And who can doubt that our Supreme Court is steadily becoming more liberal? The famous case of Professor Macintosh was lost only by a vote of five to four; and Chief Justice Hughes read the minority opinion. And now Professor Macintosh asks for a retrial, on the ground that every Quaker and every man and woman who puts first of all his conscience and his loyalty to God, is under that decision made incapable of citizenship. What kind of citizens do we want? Those who believe in conscience and in God, or those who don't?

In the letter of Thomas Jefferson, two points stand out clearly—the distinction he makes between expression of opinion and *criminal acts,* and his firm belief that "demoralizing reasonings" can do no harm, if others are left free to expose their fallacies.

There should be a tremendous, fundamental difference between the expression of politically heretical opinions and the performance of criminal deeds. The distinction is just as vital as the distinction between a man who writes a detective novel where the murderer is represented in a romantic light—and the performance of murder. Now there are people who would suppress by law imaginary stories of murder, but are they wise?

Jefferson's other point, that it is wrong and foolish to attempt to suppress "demoralizing reasonings" was never more needed than now.

I am myself a Christian and a patriot. I am an ardent church-member and I am wholly opposed to Socialism, Communism, and Collectivism. But if I thought the Christian religion could be overthrown by books and speeches attacking it, or that the government of our country could be destroyed by speeches and books against it, then I should think it high time both were destroyed and that something else should take their place.

Mr. Ray Lyman Wilbur, the secretary of the interior, a man of scholarship, practical wisdom, and integrity, said in a speech which I had the good fortune to hear, that what was most needed today was the preservation of those qualities which were peculiarly characteristic of our country during the first hundred years of its existence. I believe he is right; and I believe these qualities can be best maintained where there is the greatest individual liberty.

One of the reasons why I believe in the Christian religion and in our present form of government is because I am familiar with the strongest arguments that have ever been made against them.

An English critic, Mr. Charles Williams, has recently published an attractive and eminently readable little book of about two hundred pages, called "Poetry at Present." It is a roll-call of the chief contemporary poets of England, with a brief critical essay on each, preceded by a life-note. Here they are, in the order of their appearance on the stage:

Thomas Hardy
Robert Bridges
A. E. Housman
Rudyard Kipling
W. B. Yeats
W. H. Davies
Walter de la Mare
G. K. Chesterton
John Masefield
Ralph Hodgson
Wilfrid Gibson
L. Abercrombie
T. S. Eliot
The Sitwells (3)
Robert Graves
Edmund Blunden

He might have added William Watson,

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Robert Nichols, A. E., Alfred Noyes, Padraic Colum, Siegfried Sassoon, James Stephens, and some others. Watson has written memorable poems; but it is apparently necessary for one to keep oneself before the public. The omission of Alfred Noyes, a poet of high distinction, is not surprising, because for the last ten years he has been out of favor with the reviewers; as for Robert Nichols, he is surely as good a poet as Robert Graves or Edmund Blunden.

It is exciting that in this remarkable list of poets, there should be no woman except Elizabeth Sitwell. But who is there? The tremendous emancipation of woman, her present freedom from the tyranny of Victorian conditions, which cramped her genius, has thus far not produced a single woman in England who can write verse which compares with that of Christina Rossetti, Elizabeth Browning, Emily Brontë; why?

Mr. Charles Williams takes the conventional contemporary attitude in adoration of Robert Bridges and in ignoration of Alfred Noyes; but if Noyes is not a better poet than Bridges, I will eat the complete works of both. Robert Bridges was a scholar of the first magnitude, he had a powerful and interesting mind, and an extraordinary personality; but these qualities, rare and valuable as they are, do not necessarily produce great poetry. Mr. Williams says that of the fourteen poets laureate of England, beginning with and including Dryden, "with the exception of Dryden himself and of Wordsworth, none of them has been a greater poet than Mr. Robert Bridges." Now to place Tennyson no higher than Bridges is to be in harmony with the prevailing and conventional journalistic attitude in England at this moment; but the attitude is as ridiculous as it is insular. Suppose Bridges had written Tennyson's "Ulysses"—but he could no more have written "Ulysses" than he could have written one of Keats's Odes.

Of the list, Alfred Housman and Ralph Hodgson reach a place in the first rank on an almost incredibly slender production. There never were better illustrations of quality as opposed to quantity, for both men have added to the imperishable poetry of English literature.

The foremost living poet in the world is Rudyard Kipling; and I rejoice to see a new and magnificent edition of his verse. This is strictly limited, for it is all printed from type and the type has already been distributed. The tall volumes combine beauty and splendor; they are noble specimens of the art of publishing. I advise all who can possibly afford it to secure a set before it is too late. (Doubleday, Doran are the publishers—price for the set $75.)

A thin volume of verse by A. E. is called "Vale and Other Poems" and I sincerely hope the first word in the title is not to be taken literally. These poems have that lyric and transcendental quality characteristic of the genius of their author. I shall never forget the conversation I had with him when he told me that narrative poetry could never be so great as lyrical (he was not referring to his own work, but to that of his fellow-countryman Yeats, whom he calls Yeets) because he said that narrative poetry is on one plane, whereas the greatest poetry is always the poetry of transfiguration. "It takes two currents to make the electric light." This is one of the most penetrating remarks I have ever heard; but A. E. always says something memorable. Even if he didn't, I should still love to listen.

Professor Henry Farnam of Yale (emeritus) has produced a new book on Shakespeare that is a distinct addition to our knowledge, is full of excellent and thought-provoking ideas, and is admi-

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rably written. It is called "Shakespeare's Economics" and ought to be widely read.

And here are some thrillers: Grace White and H. L. Deakin have written a murder story called "The Square Mark," full of interest, containing attractive characters—those two young women-teachers in a girls' school are just the ones you would like to meet—and the literary style of the authors is far above the average of that found in diverting mystery-books. Elizabeth Holloway's "Cobweb House" has excitement and charm. John Wilstach, a New Yorker of wide journalistic experience, has produced a terrific thriller in "Under Cover Man," with a prefatory note telling us that not all the characters are wholly fictitious. This is a revelation of how crime goes on in a big city and how dangerous it is to be a police spy. It is not only a ripping good story; I am afraid it is history.

New books and their publishers.

"Poetry at Present," by Charles Williams. Oxford. $2.50.
Kipling's Works, limited edition, autograph of Kipling. Doubleday, Doran. $75.
"Vale and Other Poems," by A. E. Macmillan. $1.50.
"Shakespeare's Economics," by Henry Farnam. Yale University Press. $2.50.
"The Square Mark," by White and Deakin. Dutton. $2.
"Cobweb House," by Elizabeth Holloway. Dutton. $2.
"Under Cover Man," by J. Wilstach. Morrow. $2.

Stride on the Desert

By Norman Macleod

The desert is a long way in a day's journey.
One ridge is cut from the pattern of
The arroyo before it: there is no countenance
To shadow discovery.
There is much time to wrap with my thoughts
A blanket around me.
The pace of the sands is as certain
As my stride on the desert.
I hollow my life and pick the fragments up.
There is nobody to gainsay my following.
I hold myself within the grip of my arm.
Morning or evening there is no yellow wind
Like my sorrow: I do not speak of this
To another.
In the firelight there is space for my smoke
To rise into starlight.
There are buttes and monuments for my grief.
They have spoken before me.

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A New Break

(Continued from page 312)

of Mattie, but it spouted out and Mattie came in from the kitchen. Her face was flushed and her eyes fairly glistened.

"You stand for too much, you two. You ought to show them. Don't let yourself be imposed on, they will only take advantage of it. If you had brought your car, Olive, you two could just light out. You ought to give them a lesson. Let them come home and find *you* gone, for once. Don't worry about the baby. I'll take care of him." The two women were sobered by Mattie's excitement.

"Why, where would we go this time of night?" said Olive.

"Anywhere. You could go to Doylestown or Trenton. Have a good time. I'd just go to a hotel and stay there and let the men sweat when they come home."

"No," said Willa. "I'm not going to. It's not worth all that play-acting." She was suddenly quiet and she smiled and sat down and said, "They're all right, Olive. Why should we worry? It will do them good to be away for a day." Olive was quiet too. Both were suddenly aware of Mattie and the mess she had made of her affairs. They didn't care at that moment when the boys came back, just so they got there, and they didn't care how they came, drunk or sober, just so they were there.

In an undertone Willa said she was sore at Tim for being away so much but she couldn't blame him. Mattie made it so unpleasant for him, she didn't think she had a right to say a word. Olive began to think she didn't have so much right to get into a rage either, and they both agreed if they weren't satisfied, it was their own fault. If they wanted men who toed the mark and were good providers, they should have married business men and be done with it. The two laughed and tamed down, but they were still anxious and Mattie kept muttering that they had no spirit. About eleven o'clock they heard a car come up the hill.

Olive jumped up and rushed out. Willa came to the door and Mattie pressed up behind her. The car stopped and the women could hear the men tittering together. They waited to see what the men would do, and after opening and shutting the door of the car several times they both got out and came toward the kitchen with their hats pulled down on one side, their arms locked, mincing in a dance step and singing together,

> "Heel and toe, away we go,
> We always go together.
> Rain or shine, you'll never find,
> We ever mind the weather."

Mattie snorted and said, "The big idiots," but Willa burst out laughing. Even Olive smiled, but she didn't want to smile. She was sore at Phil and wished she could show it. But Mattie was too much of an object lesson. She let Phil drive down the hill before she spoke to him, and then she said, "Please drive straight."

"I am," said Phil. "What do you act so cold for, what have I done, murdered some one?"

"Oh, you've done nothing at all, you're perfect, how could you do anything?" said Olive.

"What are you carrying on for?" said Phil, acting innocent.

"Why, nothing at all; why should I carry on? I've only been sick with anxiety for hours, that's all. What would you think if I ran off like that? You wouldn't stand for it, not for a minute."

"Christ, I might have known," said Phil. "It would have to be this way."

"What way?" said Olive. "What way is it?"

"Oh, you crying and carrying on. Gee, I'm sorry, darling. I really am. I only meant to stay an hour. Tim came and said to drive with him to town and he had a long story to tell about Mattie. I'm fed up on mother-in-law trouble. Then we started back and he said what about a little drink. I said nothing that would take long because I hadn't told you, see. But he drives about twelve miles, all the time talking and saying it's just a half-mile further. I was cold by that time and we just kept on drinking, and then coming back the car broke down and we lost our way. Oh, I guess I'm no good."

"Don't you dare say that, you are good," said Olive.

"I got to thinking how I would have to go out on the road in a few months and I was so depressed I just drank and was glad to forget it."

"Listen," said Olive. "Don't run off again. I thought you were never coming back. It's

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terrible to feel like that. And I've got a surprise for you. You don't need to go on the road next time."

"No? How come?" said Phil. They were back at the garage and he drove in slowly not to scrape the doors.

"I've been holding out on you. I've two hundred saved up extra. Let's make a stab at it, what do you say? You go ahead and make the cupboards now and we'll get along. Perhaps you'll never need to go again."

"Say, that's great." He kissed her. "Tell me I'm not such a bad boy," he said. "I really love you, you don't have any idea how much."

"You're a grand boy," Olive said, "and I'm crazy about you."

"I wish you meant that."

"I do mean it."

Tim didn't come near the Bessemers for days. He was in the thick of it and had his hands full. The day after the bust, he and Mattie came to a show-down. Willa had gone to Trenton to consult the doctor. With Willa out of the way, Mattie lit into Tim and told him what a brute he was, how he was killing Willa, how he was lazy and good for nothing, and this writing idea was pure foolishness and just to give himself an exaggerated sense of importance. He had no talent, and if he had the natural feelings of a husband or a father he'd settle down and try to provide them with wood, that was the least he could do.

Tim stood quietly and let it wash over him. He never said a word until she was finished. Then he said in his slow way, "Are you all through with your hysterics? If you are, just listen to me. I've told you this before. If you don't like it here, you can get out." He lit a cigarette and looked at her full in the face, very calm, a little mocking and without a trace of anger. It made Mattie furious.

She would like to know how she could get out with Willa so sick. Who would cook, do all the work, take care of the baby? And she had no money, she'd given it all to them last winter. How could she leave? Why, she was caught if ever a mortal was, she couldn't leave. She finally broke down and began to cry and Tim, who was lining up a good many smashing and insulting retorts, suddenly held his tongue. What was the use? They really needed the poor woman and they owed her money.

He began on a new tack and said they would have to make the best of it. He was as he was and Mattie was as she was. "I don't like your kind any more than you like mine," said Tim. "I think your kind spoils everything, they go around fussing and making little things important and they ruin the world. You think my kind is no good. Well, let's not argue it, see. But for Willa's sake, let's shut up. If she needs quiet, we'll give her quiet. I can't change and you can't, but we can shut up, can't we?" Mattie was a good sport. They shook hands on it and Mattie even admitted that it was a lot her fault on account of the way she had been brought up.

When Willa came home she could hardly believe her eyes. Mattie was actually cheerful and Tim whispered that he had had a show-down and everything would be fine from now on. He really thought so. He typed away all evening, carefully writing one paragraph over and over.

The doctor had not been very cheerful about Willa's condition. He warned her that unless she had absolute rest, an operation would be needed. Her heart raced along, and lately when she talked her words raced too. She talked it over with Tim and Mattie and all agreed she must lie still and do nothing.

For the next few days Tim brought in the wood and took care of the furnace, but soon things dropped back to the way they were before. Mattie held Willa over Tim as a continual goad. "There's no more oil in the stove," she would say to nobody in particular. Or, "Willa, aren't you cold in here, don't you think we need more fire?" Or, "Willa, don't you think we need stuff from town to-day? We're out of oranges." There was no peace.

Tim was worn out trying to work at night, and in the daytime he never had a chance to sleep. Mattie thought up dozens of errands and still nothing was ever done, according to her. When Tim went to the village, he took to staying longer and longer. Mattie fussed and fumed but Willa lay on the couch and never breathed a word. She had begun to read a good deal and was reading a whole set of Balzac she had borrowed from the Bessemers. She shut herself up in herself, she knew where she stood. She had to lock herself in and keep very still and save herself. Neither Tim nor Mattie could save her. The baby worried her with his playing, but she shut herself in from him too. She was all alone.

When the Flahertys and the Bessemers had first come to the country, Phil and Tim decided not to get too chummy with the natives and not to let the natives know there was any drinking going on. At that time there was very little drinking. Tim drank a little and

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sat a long time over it in a sociable way. He was a good listener then too. When he had a chance he talked in his slow way, but he never insisted on talking the way he did later on.

After the day's jaunt with Phil the situation changed a little. When Phil found he was not going on the road he got right down to business and began fixing up his workroom in the barn and installing his machinery. He was happy and busy, and when Tim came over one afternoon he was short with him and refused a drink.

He even told Tim he ought to cut it out and get down to his work, lots of fellows would be glad of his chance. Tim said he knew that, but Mattie wouldn't give him a chance to work. If he could get the key to the Lawrence house, he could work. The Lawrences only came out in the summer, they were friends of Willa's, and Phil said, "Why not? That's a fine idea. Go to it, big boy."

Tim made a trip to town to get the key. He was glad of the excuse and he spent another two days "on business." Mattie was left up the creek again. The roads were bad, she couldn't get down for the milk, a half-mile away. She was frantic by the time Tim got back. They were simply at his mercy. He moved his typewriter over to the Lawrence house that night. Now he had nothing to do but work.

He buckled down to business and turned out a few pages in two days. Mattie fixed up a dish of food each day and he ate over at the Lawrence house, warming up the stuff on the stove.

Seidel had beat it away. No one knew where. It was a good riddance, Mattie said, but Tim wondered about the old fellow, walking the roads in the cold.

He hadn't been at the Lawrence house four days before he brought home a little stray pup. He knew Mattie wouldn't have the pup around, so he took it to the Lawrence house and fixed a box for it in the kitchen. Now he had company and he even slept at the Lawrence house, only going home in the morning to get milk for the baby and to do the shopping.

Mattie was pleased at the new arrangement. It left the house clear and she took delight in the meals she and Willa had together with the baby peacefully playing with his toys. She looked forward to the time when Tim would light out for good and leave them alone. She was sure that would happen sooner or later. He would run off, he would get fed up with it and run away. The only thing that would make it hard for him to go was the baby.

He was crazy about the kid; he had been the one begging and insisting on a kid even when Willa doubted the wisdom of it. He would hold out a long time on account of the kid. What Willa felt for Tim or Tim for Willa, she had no real idea of and didn't want to have. They were mute in front of her and neither confided in her. She thought what she preferred to think and took comfort in it.

With Phil so busy and not disposed to drink, Tim began going to the village and talking in a confidential way with a couple of the men there. The barber was a good fellow and so was the young butcher. The barber was a pioneer in his way. He had been first to introduce knickers into the town. He always wore them, and always wore a black windsor tie. The tie was a relic of his ambition to become an artist. Professor Jack liked to think of barbering as an art. He called his place a tonsorial parlor. Larry had no such claims, he was only a good butcher.

The three would meet in the back room of the butcher-shop after hours for a few shots and a little philosophical conversation. Tim was handicapped because he couldn't tell his life story to them. Nobody in that neighborhood knew of his past and he recognized it was important they shouldn't know. But he was able to pose as an authority on criminal cases and on crime, and he kept Larry and Prof Jack fascinated with his analysis of the murders as they came on in the papers.

One night there was a big fire over near Doylestown and the three tore over in Larry's car. It was a great big new barn, and the man and his family had started from the house only a half-hour before the fire started. Prof, Larry and Tim stood on the outskirts looking on as a big crowd gathered, saying, isn't it a shame, four cows burned, a horse, and all his tools. Tim snooped around listening and watching, and the way the old gent who owned it wailed and carried on convinced Tim he was overdoing it. The idea came to him that the old gent had done it on purpose and he went over to his two satellites and told them his suspicions.

"You see," Tim said, "I think he did it himself. Now let me show you just how he did it. He's a firebug, see. Only last year his other barn burned down, see, and then he got insurance and built this one and raised the insurance. He raised it high. Times were bad this year, do you understand, see, the crop was poor, milk prices low and feed high. He fig-

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ures he'll burn the barn and get out of the mess. He leaves everything in so nobody will get suspicious. Then he starts the fire, understand, small, under some wet straw. He and the family start off for the evening. He doesn't let them into the secret for fear they'll blab. He gets about ten miles off and some one phones to stop him, his barn's on fire. He comes back in a sweat to save it, but of course he doesn't want to. Wait and see if I'm not right."

Prof and Larry thought it was wonderful to dope out a situation like that. "I don't see how you do it," Larry said. "Why, you know just what's going on in the fellow's mind."

"He'll be reading our minds next," said Prof.

"Gee, yes; well, just so you don't tell my wife what's in mine," said Larry.

The next day when Prof and Larry found out the insurance people agreed with Tim, they thought he was a marvel. They told him he was a regular wizard and he felt pleased and chesty. He was a long time that day bringing home the groceries. But with Mattie always trying to make him feel like a piece of dirt, he had to get support from some one, even it was only Prof and Larry.

When he came back home and Mattie took the stuff away from him, unable to keep the withering look from her face, even her hands as she grabbed the sacks were scornful, he felt very weary and stood in the doorway looking at Willa as she lay propped up with pillows, reading. Willa put her book down and looked at Tim. His coat was muddy and his trousers were torn at the knees. The car had broken down again. He needed a shave and he looked so tired the tears came into her eyes. She put out her hand and he went over to her and sat down.

"Poor boy," she said in a whisper so Mattie wouldn't hear.

"I'm all right," Tim said. "Don't bother about me." But he felt swell to have her care for him, he took on new life and went out and shaved, and at four o'clock was off to the Lawrence house to begin his work.

The fire was out and it was pretty cold. The pup had messed up the place and had torn open a pillow. Feathers were everywhere. It took an hour to clean things up. Then he was so tired, he just sat there, dreaming and thinking things over. He made coffee and drank cup after cup, and along about nine o'clock he began slowly typing.

The publishers were pleased with his stuff but they kept urging him to get more done. They kept writing him notes intended to be encouraging but they just got under his skin. Tim began to think of them as drivers and he had one driver in Mattie, and another set of drivers was more than he could stand. The thirty-five dollars sent him was not enough. He had doctor's bills, another payment on the first mortgage was due January 1, interest was due on a note, he owed money all around.

When he went to town he was always dead broke, and he got loans from his friends, hoping to pay them back. He did pay them back, as fast as he could, but usually with more borrowed money. The three hundred dollars was all gone long ago. He had a note at the village bank that took more than half of it. He was worried sick, and to make matters worse the publishers were always late with his check.

It was supposed to come regularly every Monday, but it never did. Tuesday he wired them, Wednesday he called them on the phone. Sometimes he bolted into town to demand it.

He kept on overdrawing at the bank. They warned him not to do it, but he resented their warnings. Willa tried to tell him the bank was nicer to them than they deserved, but Tim thought they were a bunch of drivers and bloodsuckers. To him they were in the category of people who lived to respect money.

Things went along getting worse all the time and Tim's friends began to resent his disrespect for money. He saw this change going on in them and he drank more all the time. He was never without a flask of Ellie's rawest. He spent more and more time with Prof and Larry and was ashamed for doing it. He was mortified to waste his time like that and his only consolation was his pride in being able to realize his situation. He saw himself all right. He knew where he stood, and he hung on to his writing, waiting for a break. Things couldn't get much worse, they were bound to get better.

A week before Christmas it began to snow and it kept right on coming down. Everybody was glad and said it would be fine to have a white Christmas. The Bessemers left for Kentucky in their little car the night the snow began. Olive had a telegram saying her father had died and she and Phil drove out to the funeral. They left at midnight, first writing a note to Tim, asking him if he would come over and feed their cats every day.

Tim took food over to the Bessemer cats every day and sometimes he stood quite a while calling, "Kitty, kitty," so they would be

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sure to come and get the food while it was still warm.

The day before Christmas Willa made a big wreath out of cedar twigs and she tied a red ribbon on it and told Tim to take it over to the Bessemers. She was sure they would get back that day. Willa and Mattie consulted and decided it would be nice to have Phil and Olive over for Christmas dinner. They thought it would be more cheerful for Olive. Tim took the wreath, and Phil and Olive saw him come on the run splashing through the snow. They had just got back and were standing in their coats, waiting for the house to warm up. Tim burst in on them with the wreath and invitation. His face was beaming, he was happy to have done them a good turn.

Olive was very quiet and she looked pale and tired, but Phil made Tim take off his overcoat while he mulled a little home-made wine. The stuff tasted good with its cinnamon, cloves, and lemon, and the two fellows warmed up slowly sipping it.

Phil said, "Don't forget, Tim, some of the world's best literature was written on mulled wine."

"Is that right?" said Tim, sipping his with pleasure.

"You're damned right. Take old Sam Johnson and Ben Jonson and Marlowe. All those guys drank mulled wine."

"I never thought much of Sam," said Tim. "But Marlowe was a good man in his day. Wasn't he the one who said plague on her for a hot whore?"

"That's the guy," said Phil. "'And marriage is but a ceremonial toy. Think no more of it. I'll cull thee out the fairest courtesans and bring them every morning to thy bed.'"

"Well, he was damned right, too," said Tim. "That's the stuff. Then there would be no mothers-in-law."

"Well, here's to mothers-in-law, may they all perish," said Phil.

"And here's to the courtesans, may they all flourish," said Tim. The two rose and, touching glasses, drank solemnly.

Olive did her best to cheer up for Phil's sake, and in the afternoon they took a tree and a little red chair for Peter, and a box of nuts and candy and went over to the Flahertys. It was about five in the afternoon. A thick crust had formed on top of the snow, scrunching as they walked on it. It was nearly dark. The lamps were lit and fine smells came out of the kitchen. Mattie, red as a lobster, called hello and kept on basting the turkey. There was a fire in the fireplace and everything looked shined up and festive.

Phil hauled in the tree and they began putting on the ornaments so the baby could see it before he went to bed. He kept crawling around and saying, "Oh," in a soft, long drawl, for all the world like Tim. He was the image of Tim. Even Mattie had shut up talking about the kid being exactly like her son Gerald, who was a good business man out in Texas. She even admitted there was a trace of Tim's sisters in the boy, but she didn't see a trace of Tim.

They fixed the tree and Willa helped them. She had a pretty silk dress on and a lace fichu to hide her neck. Her eyes looked bad and she was much thinner. Tim was nowhere to be seen. The tree was lighted, the baby ooohed at it, then he had to go to bed. Mattie took him up-stairs and Phil said, "Where's the old man?"

"I don't know," said Willa, "but I guess he'll be here soon." She laughed to show she wasn't worried about him. The table was all set. Mattie came down and said everything was done and the dinner would be ruined. If he didn't care enough about his family to come home, they ought to sit down and eat. Willa said, "All right, mamma, we'll begin without him if he isn't here in five minutes." Before the five minutes were up Tim came in in high spirits. Willa gave one look at him and saw he was lit. She was fixing an ornament on the tree and she went behind the tree to hide herself.

Tim said, "Well, here we all are, isn't this nice." He went after Willa and pulled her toward him. "Give us a kiss," he said.

"Don't," Willa said. "Oh, I just hate you for getting tight to-day. Couldn't you just for one day be decent?" She was crying. Everybody felt uncomfortable and Mattie, who had been storming around in the kitchen, quieted down like a lamb. She came to the door and gave Olive an I-told-you-so look and went back to the kitchen again. Olive followed her to help dish out the food. "Poor Willa," said Mattie in a whisper. "I feel so sorry for Willa." But you could see she was really pleased. Phil was joshing Tim and trying to cheer Willa up. She stopped crying and now stood half laughing.

"Oh, your nice tie," she said. "Look, it's all mussed up and a big spot on it. Can't you keep anything nice? Why, papa just sent it to you. He hasn't had it on before," she said, turning to Phil.

"What a boy," joked Phil. He told Tim to

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come on out and they would bring in a little more wood. The air might do Tim good.

"Gee, you all think I'm tight," said Tim. "I'm not tight."

"Where were you all day, bothering other people?"

"Bothering? Who says bothering? I was calling. I called on Prof and Larry."

"I bet their wives liked that."

"Oh, say, did Prof's wife give me a look! Is she a terror! We were sitting in the kitchen and she came in and gave me such a look."

"You ought to be ashamed," said Willa, half in fun, "to go around making trouble in other people's families. It's bad enough in your own."

"Who says I've got trouble in my family? I've got no trouble," said Tim. He went over and kissed Willa and she tried to laugh off her feeling toward him. The dinner was now on the table and everybody sat down. It was a fine dinner. The turkey was a big affair and there was everything to go with it. Mattie sat at the head and Tim at the foot. It was up to Tim to carve. In the centre of the table was a wooden fruit-dish. The doctor had sent it from Switzerland. When you lifted it, it played a tiny tune.

Tim stood up to carve the turkey and the knife looked very awkward in his hand. He was talking a blue streak, just running on and on. No one listened. Mattie sat with her head down and Olive and Phil were so tired out from their long drive to Kentucky and back, and the strain and all, that they didn't feel like putting forth much effort. Only Willa made an attempt at company manners. She was ashamed of her collapse and wanted to make up for it. She listened to everything Tim said and made the proper answers.

Tim was murdering the turkey. He couldn't handle the knife and no one would admit he couldn't. They all watched him hack the tender white meat into great thick hunks. He put too much food on every plate, and when it came to his own, he sat down and slowly loaded it with a little of everything. The food didn't taste right to any of them. Now that Willa was bright again, Mattie was low and didn't say a word during the meal. Tears stood quite plainly in her eyes but she tried not to let them roll down her cheeks.

Tim was giving a long and monotonous oration. His talk seemed to stupefy the rest of them, they were quiet and busy with their own thoughts. Now and then Phil or Olive spoke up to help Willa out in her labor of making Tim feel that it was all right.

"Literature," said Tim, letting the food get cold on his plate, "should be close to the great common experiences of us all if it endures. It must make its appeal to the life of man." He was working hard for his words and, pleased with the sound, he rolled and repeated them. "You take Joyce."

"Yes, by all means take him," said Phil, waking up.

"Take Joyce. There's an instance. In my opinion the 'Portrait of an Artist' will live longer than Ulysses. It's more rounded, a more complete work, less chaotic."

"Oh, hell," said Phil. "Why, you've never read Ulysses."

"That's right, Tim," said Willa. "You know you've never read it. All you know is those conversations you read with your Irish voice."

"I'll read them for you now," said Tim.

"Don't," said Phil. "Eat your dinner. I've heard you read those too often."

"All the same," said Tim, "I believe I am right in my statement."

"I won't argue it," said Phil. "Not until you've read more of Ulysses than you have."

"A work to be great must live," said Tim.

"That's a lot of crap too. How do you know how many good things die if you don't hear of them?"

"Eat your dinner," said Willa. Tim ate and the others waited politely until he was through before bringing on the dessert. It was a lovely pie and coffee. Tim insisted on pouring his own. The cup ran over and Mattie bit her lip, but Willa acted as if she didn't see it. She lifted the fruit-dish and handed it toward Olive. The pretty little tune began playing.

Mattie hung her head down, she wished she could decently think of an excuse to go upstairs. She couldn't bear to see her only daughter in such a position on Christmas day. Her low spirits made the others try to pull themselves together, and before they rose from the table everybody but Mattie was laughing.

Tim took all the credit for it and kept on rolling out the words, determined to keep on being the life of the party.

They stacked up the dishes and sat around the fireplace cracking nuts. But when Tim still kept on talking about literature, Phil gradually turned his back and before very long he was off by himself reading a magazine. Olive sat with her eyes staring into the fire not hearing a word. Mattie went over to lie down on the couch and only Willa was left. She sat near Tim listening to the long speeches, smiling and nodding and even go-

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ing to the trouble of answering some of his arguments, that really had very little meaning.

The fire died down and no one noticed it until the air was chilly, and then Olive shivered and suggested they go home. Mattie staggered to her feet and said she guessed everybody was frozen out but she thought this one day she might be spared going down to tend the furnace.

"You do it, Tim," said Willa, nudging his foot with her own.

"Why, yes, Mattie," said Tim. "Just a minute, I'll do it." Mattie sat another five minutes while Tim unwound some more comment with deliberate slowness; then she jerked to her feet and banged down the steps to the cellar. They could hear her jerking at it and poking it. The house shook. Tim suddenly came to himself. With Mattie out of the room he quit spouting and, thoroughly sober, said, "She does it on purpose to knock down the pipe. Wait and see." In a few minutes they heard Mattie storm up the stairs and then she opened the door.

"You'll just have to fix that pipe, it came down on me again. Anybody else would fix it so it stays fixed. It just drives me crazy."

"Sit down, mamma," said Willa. "They'll fix it."

"We'll fix it," said Phil and the two went down-stairs. The others could hear them laughing and joking until Mattie stamped on up to bed and Olive called, "Get a move on, I want to go home."

With the holidays over, Tim made great resolutions and tried hard to turn out a lot of work each day. He quit drinking, Ellie's booze had gone back on him and his stomach was sore. He stayed most of the time at the Lawrence house, made his own fire and cooked most of his own food. Coffee was his chief standby. If it weren't for the chores he would be cut off from his home, but he went around every morning to take milk to the baby and to go to town for the shopping.

He made a point of playing with the baby every day. The kid was crazy about Tim and always good when he was around. If Tim found the boy in tears he had only to make a face at him and laugh to have the kid grinning too.

Willa was gradually worse instead of better. After the New Year she began to be fatter and for a few days thought it meant an improvement, but it was not healthy fat, it was all water and the doctor put her on a dry diet. Mattie's heart stood still sometimes in the mornings when Willa came down-stairs with her face bloated and her color a strange unearthly gray. She sat at the kitchen table, not complaining and eating dry, hard food and crusts. Mattie couldn't face her and had to turn her back to hide her fear.

At night, Willa had bad dreams. Sometimes she woke trembling, feeling sick as if she had just found out that Tim had run away and left her. More than once she wondered if he had another girl. Sometimes she thought he acted that way. She had no opportunity to find out what was going on in his mind, they were never alone to talk. She said to herself that when she was well again, she would show him. She would dress up and they would have a swell time together.

Willa used all her will-power to keep from agitating herself with complicated thoughts. She wanted to get well and she let herself drift into pleasant ideas about the future.

All of Tim's friends loaned him small sums on the side. They had a feeling he would pull out of it, and anyhow he was a swell guy. He would do as much for them and more. And he had lived through jail and Matteawan, he ought to be able to live through a little mother-in-law trouble. They joked him about it but it was getting thick for them too. After all, it was the same old story.

Tim was so haunted by the conditions of his life that he talked his head off to any one who would listen. He couldn't get loose from his trouble. It was easy for friends to tell him to snap out of it and get rid of Mattie, but they needed her now. He waited for Willa to get well. She did not worry him very much. Strong as an ox himself, he thought people made too much of sickness. Willa was grateful to him for keeping his head. That was better than fussing like an old granny.

The publishers praised Tim's stuff and he strutted a little at their praise. He had not yet tackled his best material and he kept telling them to wait, he would open their eyes. The thirty-five dollars came along as irregularly as ever and Tim tore into New York as often as three times a month to get it. It took him away from his writing and made him sore and weary. But he didn't want to quit. He had tried to make money selling wood, and with all his hard work they made a bare living. He looked on the thirty-five dollars a week as his last chance, but so much time was wasted, his energy was low. He was used up combating his mother-in-law.

Toward the first of February the doctor

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said Willa should have an operation right away. Her heart was being affected and her condition now becoming serious. Mattie told Olive that any one with half an eye could have told it was serious months ago and but for Tim's selfishness she would have recovered without an operation. Tim was convinced that Mattie was to blame.

Willa was glad it had come to an operation. She was sick to death of lying around like an invalid. She knew that if it went on much longer, Tim would bolt as Mattie was always predicting. He wouldn't intend to, but it would happen. She was a little afraid how the operation might turn out. She and Olive had a long, private conversation about little Peter. Willa was set in her determination not to let Mattie bring the baby up. All along she had tussled with her not to spoil the boy and she didn't want him dragged back to the very conditions from which she herself had tried so hard to break.

"Why, I'd rather the wildest of my friends had him," she told Olive. "He'd have more of a chance. I don't want him to respect the things Mattie respects. The funny thing is that she tried to break with all that kind of thing herself. She pulled away in one direction but not in another. Look how she worships order and regular salaries. She thinks she doesn't, but she does. I won't have Peter's life cluttered up with her prejudices." But she could think of no plan for the boy and she was heart-sick thinking of him with Tim, who would be grand to the kid, but never know when he was dirty or hungry. Perhaps Tim would find a nice girl and marry again. It shocked her to think that with hardly a pang and she hoped her sickness was responsible for such indifference.

No one knew where money for the operation was coming from. Mattie was certain Willa's father would come forward to help if Willa wrote him. Since the postponed visit, Willa had been very close-mouthed with her father. His excuse, that he never received her boat letter and, not knowing whether she was prepared for him to come down, had gone home, seemed very lame. She knew the doctor was busy and in a rush to be home, but she was convinced that in the background some objection of Lydia's carried weight. She got on her high horse and wrote less frankly to her father than formerly. She was a little jealous of the hold Lydia had on her father. The doctor tried to make it up to her by sending her frequent sums of money. According to Mattie he just poured it down a sieve. The money disappeared, no one knew how, and the improvements for which it was intended had still to be made.

Tim was agitating among his friends for a loan. None of his friends had money. They worked and had debts of their own. He talked it over with Phil. "When I think how easy it would be to get money. Why, I could go back to the fur racket for one night and clean up for the winter."

"For God's sake, you're not talking seriously?"

"No, don't tell Willa. She'd have a fit if she heard me say that even in fun. But look, the country's lousy with money. Don't you know any rich guys?"

"There's Bill Bedlow. His father's rich. His father has fifteen million dollars."

"Say, that's an idea," said Tim.

"You can't get anything out of him. He hasn't got it. His father keeps him under his thumb, see. He makes him stick on the job and he keeps tab of him all the time. Bill never has a cent for a show or anything he really wants. He can't help you out."

"I'm going in town to-morrow and see what I can stir up. With all this going on I'm way behind with my work. I've got Mattie on my tail and the publishers on my tail."

"Wish I could help you, Tim, but you know how we're fixed." Phil was thinking that nothing but a miracle could save Tim. Lately he was uncomfortable with Tim, and all Tim's friends felt the same. They were almost as depressed as Tim at the same old story.

Tim was saved from drumming up money for the operation. Willa was afraid to foist that burden on Tim and she swallowed her pride and wrote her father. The doctor wired to consider him responsible for the arrangements. Tim took her down to Philadelphia on Friday and they sat in the train talking mostly about Mattie. Tim wouldn't admit there was the slightest danger. He joked about the scar around her neck and said he would have to buy her a diamond necklace to cover it up.

"The doctor said it wouldn't be very big," said Willa.

"It'll be absolutely a fine scar. It won't even show in a year," said Tim.

He left her at the hospital that night and hunted up a cheap hotel. He had ham and eggs in a lunch wagon and then walked around the streets. He didn't think much of the town. The big stores in this town had been the easiest to crack up of any in the country. It was a walkaway. It would be the same now. He went around to Chestnut Street and look-

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ed in the store windows. There were a lot of fine fur coats on handsome women models. The day he had plucked this very store, he came out at half past nine in the morning with four big hat boxes full of furs. The doorman himself called a taxi.

He was moody thinking of the past and walked around looking for some way to pass the time. When he came to a pool hall, he went in and stayed until twelve o'clock, putting up a pretty good game. His hand was still good. He would like a chance at boxing again. He bet his left still had punch in it.

He didn't get to bed until two, but he was at the hospital at nine. They were already wheeling Willa toward the operating-room. He came along the hall breathless, his coat open and flapping, and saw them wheeling her toward him. She was covered with a sheet, all except her face, and that looked very gray and puffy around the eyes. He went right up and walked beside her, holding her hand.

"You all right?" he said, squeezing her hand hard. Suddenly he was very afraid. He was afraid he might even break down and show how scared he was. Willa held his hand and pressed it. Neither could think of a word.

"It'll all be over soon," he said. "I'll be right here."

"I'm all right," said Willa.

"I know it," said Tim.

He went with her up to the door of the operating-room and looked inside. It was very bright and all white, even the nurses and doctors. They shut the door on him, a nurse smiling and saying, "You can't come in, wait outside, please." He walked down the hall and then came back again. There was a bench, but he didn't sit down. Through the transom he could hear voices. He heard Willa's voice, "Be sure to give me enough, won't you, doctor?"

"We'll give you enough. Don't worry."

"Take it easy now, breathe deep, easy."

He went down-stairs and asked the girl at the desk if she had a paper. She had a morning paper and he read it with care, paying especial attention to the weather notes. At the end of the first page, he went back to the operating-room. The door was still closed. It was quiet inside, he wondered if it was over.

Then he heard a sharp voice and another and some one spoke rapidly. Then louder. "I thought you told me she was in condition." He strained to hear the answer but could hear nothing but murmurs. He walked up and down the hall and opposite a window a great crane was moving rigidly back and forth. The window was closed to shut out the noise of the riveting. There was nothing to worry about. Having a baby was much worse and she got out of that. Why, in this day and age, what did an operation amount to? Just a little slit in the neck, that's all. He had to keep moving and went down-stairs. A nurse stopped him.

"Are you looking for some one?"

"I'm waiting for my wife," he said. "Is it over?"

"Where is she?"

"In the operating-room."

"I can't tell you. Inquire at the desk, please."

He was going back to the desk when he decided to run out and buy a few flowers. He fumbled in his pockets and found less than a dollar and his ticket home. At a little shop on the corner he bought five tulips for seventy-five cents and went back. They were just wheeling her into the room. Her eyes were closed and he wondered if she were breathing.

The operating surgeon walked behind and when he saw Tim he brightened and took him aside. "She came through fine," he said. "Nothing to worry about. Her condition wasn't so good as I had been led to expect by her local doctor, but she's going to be A1 before long."

"That's great. Thanks. Thanks, doctor," said Tim. He couldn't think of another thing. The nurse said, "You can come in now." And he went in. She was in bed and still asleep. The bandages and her pale face made her look like a nun.

The nurse said when she woke she mustn't talk and he might as well not be there. It would perhaps worry her. She put his tulips in a vase and shooed him from the room. He felt foolish and happy, and the nurse treating him like a schoolboy who doesn't know enough to wipe his nose tickled him. It was appropriate and he liked it. In the afternoon he walked around and drank three cups of coffee and had a nickel left. In spite of aching with hunger, he was in fine spirits. He planned the next six chapters of his book and thought what a sensation it would make and how they would be on their feet and owe nothing to any one.

At five-thirty he was back at the hospital. Willa was doing fine and he could see her the next day. He took the last train home to report to Mattie, who, very pale, came out in the yard to meet him.

"Everything's all right," he called. "She came through fine."

Mattie cried when she heard it and the two were so friendly they ate supper sitting side

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by side, joking and laughing, and Mattie saw to it that all Tim's second helpings were good and hot.

During the week that Willa was in the hospital, Tim and Mattie tried hard to be agreeable. The operation had sobered them and they made an effort to be fair with one another. Mattie was generous enough to tell Olive that Tim did very well considering his handicaps, and Tim in long conversations with the Bessemers defended Mattie and said she was just what her environment had made her. He put a good deal of the blame on Mattie's father.

Tim had never seen Mattie's father. The old gent had been dead for many years, but Mattie drummed up his virtues so often, Tim was sick of his very name. Everything the old man stood for seemed all wrong to Tim. He had lived to be precise, to take care of his money, pay his debts, wind his watch, and be a practical joker.

The practical joking was the worst of all. According to Tim, practical joking was a cheap way to feel superior. The old man had applied his practical joking to everything, he belittled everything, and he led Mattie in his footsteps. The old man was a scoffer who had no faith in anything but himself, and Mattie was dipped in the same dye. She was a doubter and scorned men. She had no belief. She couldn't stick to anything, from her marriage to her love affairs, on up through her many business ventures. The principle of ridicule was in her blood and belittling was part of her bones. Tim saw her as a doomed failure. She got no fun out of life. He was very cheerful seeing her in that light. He was certain she would also fail in her attempt to separate Willa from him.

The two ate at the same table all the time Willa was gone, and they made conversation about themselves and the baby and Willa. Mattie asked for wood in the sweetest tones she could muster. It was truce between them. Underneath they sized each other up and came to their own conclusions. If Tim thought Mattie a failure, she certainly thought him one. To Mattie, he was an absolute no-account, a fellow who had possibilities once, but could no longer hope for much. He was ruined by his record, his upbringing, his wrong ideas. He wanted a family but made no practical effort to support them. It was a crime.

Sometimes Mattie's thoughts were too much for her and a swift look of contempt passed over her face. She shut down on it in a moment, but Tim was too quick, he saw the look and knew what was in her mind. For a long time he had boasted that he was more than a match for Mattie. He was no longer so sure. He was being worn down, just by time alone and the continual droppings of daily living. It was too much for him. He liked to think he was thick-skinned, an ox, but he was getting shaky. He could no longer bear to be in the house, and all the time the truce lasted between him and Mattie, he knew they were only sizing each other up for a new tussle.

When Willa came back she was as thin as a rail, with a tiny pale face and big, sad eyes. It made Mattie sick to see her, but Tim just joked and said he liked 'em fat, and if she wanted to make a hit with him, she would have to lay a little on. Mattie thought he was vulgar to talk like that. The young people all talked too loud, used language her father would have considered indecent. She had trained herself to fall in with it and to laugh, but sometimes a wave of shock came over her. She resented feeling like that, she wanted to be a good sport, but she couldn't help it. And the young attracted her, not the old. She had nothing in common with a man her own age. Such a man was just an old idiot to her, with one foot in the grave.

For a few weeks after Willa was home everything was as smooth as silk. Tim and Mattie were polite to one another, and Tim tried to remember the many things Mattie considered necessary to be done. He still worked at the Lawrence place. Every day he made several trips to the village. If there was no shopping for the house, he went in for a paper or to talk. Neither Prof nor Larry could make much of Tim's philosophical discussions, but they were impressed. Tim liked to see their look of bewildered respect and he would lay the long words on thick.

Afterward he felt confident and like working, and at the Lawrence place he pounded away on his typewriter until late in the night or sat there, dreaming. The fire sometimes went out and the frost began to creep up on the window-panes. At dawn he went to sleep, throwing himself into bed, often in his underwear. He felt seedy most of the time and looked it, and at the bank they said Flaherty wasn't the man he had been.

Willa was not so much concerned at Tim's rundown appearance as she was at their money difficulties. But she shoved away her worries and kept placid in her determination to get well. It was still a long road to recovery. She was fatter and her eyes were normal. In

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a few weeks no one would notice the slight scar on her neck. Tim thought she should begin taking more responsibility and more interest. Mattie commenced her old complaints of her cracked hands, her cold feet, her aches and pains. She even hinted at suicide, but Willa let her hint. She could see and hear them prodding and buzzing at her to get well and to be her old self, but she let them buzz. She lay in a sort of daze and wouldn't lift a finger, not if the place fell about her very ears.

The baby was learning to walk. He staggered around, fell down, and never cried at his bumps. He was fine and healthy, and Tim liked to show him off in the town. He and Larry and the Professor had some talks on bringing up kids. Prof had several boys and Larry had a little girl. Larry said if he had to do it again he didn't believe he would marry that young. He would travel and see something.

"Well," said Tim, "to have good kids, you've got to have good adults. You can't expect to bring up fine kids in a bad environment. That's the big thing, background. You've got to make a decent world if you want decent people in it." Tim had to be careful what he said in these discussions. It wouldn't do to expose his record. His credit was none too good anyhow. The bank had its eye on him. Every now and then he took a chance and kited a check.

Through it all, he kept himself calm. He made a religion out of it. "You take women," he said. "They lose out on account of hysteria. If you sit tight, keep calm, everything will come your way." He even had the guts to talk that way in front of Mattie.

"Keep calm?" she snorted. "Just what has keeping calm done for you? I'd like to know." Tim never bothered to reply to such a volley. Mattie wouldn't understand if he did. She was a limited person in Tim's eyes. He preferred to talk with people of some comprehension. But even if the comprehension of Prof and Larry was limited, they made up for it in admiring interest.

They all three agreed that a better world would make better children. When they thought of a better world Larry thought of more travel and better cars at cheaper prices. The Prof thought of Florida in the winter, and evenings at the Elks Club, and stopping at hotels, and women on the side. Larry also thought of women. He also believed he should read more and he wished he could have gone to college. He would like to know more about the lives of prostitutes. Tim's better world was a complete upheaval. It was also a world in which Mattie's father would have been put in his proper place.

Tim would rather talk with the Bessemers than with the Prof or Larry, but lately they had discouraged him. Olive had even yawned in the midst of a long exposition. Phil clapped him on the back.

"Write it," he said. "That's the stuff, write it." Well, he was writing it, give him a break. Talking clarified his ideas, he found out where he was at. Phil had his machinery set up and was working on his furniture. His industry made Tim a little tired. It made him feel he should work more, and he was looking for excuses. He would rather talk about writing than do it.

Talking about it was swell, it made him think it was all finished and selling already. Later he knew he was kidding himself and he tried to work in spite of all the distractions. He began more and more to see himself in terms of the future. He even thought the publishers were not giving him a square deal. Just as he was getting ready to charge into town and tell them where they got off and what did they think he was, a truck driver, a mechanic, he was writing literature, not ads, it took time, it took thought, what the hell—just at that moment a letter came saying they would be obliged to stop his weekly remittances. He had sent them nothing for three weeks, and judging from the amount they had on hand he was only a third through the book. They had paid him three hundred and fifty dollars already and at that rate the advance would be more than they wished to stand for.

"What are we going to do?" said Willa.

"If they think they can get away with that," said Tim, "I'll tell them where to head in." But he wasn't certain what he could do. They had him up a tree. He heated up the coffee in the pot and drank off two strong cups. Then he shaved and brushed his hat. He was going to drive to town and show them.

Mattie was secretly pleased at the turn Tim's affairs had taken. It would not be long before the worst came to the worst. Tim was in debt up to his ears and where was the money coming from? Even if he could persuade the publishers to give more money, it would be a drop in the bucket. But Mattie was pinning her hopes on more than a money complication. She had her eyes open and saw that Tim was impatient with Willa.

Twice Mattie had found letters in the mailbox addressed to Tim in what looked to her a woman's hand. If Tim got into trouble quick

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enough, Willa's father would clear off the mortgage and the two women and the baby could go on living there and open a tea-room or go in for an antique shop. Tim was sure to get tangled up with some woman, and Mattie believed that would end it. At the thought, she forgot her aches and pains.

She was almost at the end of her rope, she hoped things would come to a head soon. Her eyes felt boiled all the time, and pains in the back of her neck almost drove her crazy. Perhaps she was going crazy. It wouldn't surprise her. She had been through enough. And what was there left to her except to go mad? She hated the thought of going back into business again. No, she was through with it, it meant nothing. If they would let her be a grandmother and stay with the baby, she would be all right. Tim was only in the way.

Willa had quit telling her mother to relax and take it easy. She believed that Mattie had no wish to take it easy, she wanted to break down before their very eyes and make them feel guilty. She hated to see Mattie go to such lengths. She had always considered her a good sport, so independent and capable. What ailed her now, that she couldn't see how things stood? Was she so insensitive not to see? She didn't want to see.

It made Willa furious to have her mother so blind, and it made her miserable. She had a continual ache about Mattie. Even if she went away, she would ache. She would worry and wonder to the end of her days. The relationship seemed all pain that would last until one's own deathbed. She didn't want her own boy to feel like that. It would be better to have him love her less, to have him grow even indifferent.

Mattie was on her feet all day long. She swept the floor around the fireplace a dozen times a day. If there was nothing else, she had knitting for the baby. All the time she complained of the work, but never gave herself a chance for anything else. Willa couldn't see how a family so small could cause so much trouble. In the old days huge families lived in these old houses and the women cooked and washed and baked for a dozen.

"How did the women manage in the old days?" Willa said.

"They wore out," said Mattie, knitting fast.

"Well, you're wearing out as it is."

"What difference does it make if I wear out?" said Mattie. "I'm through. I'm no good to myself and it's time I wore out."

"You ought to be ashamed to talk like that," said Willa. "With your ability and energy and looking so young."

"I'm only telling the truth," said Mattie.

"You're not. You're trying to be a martyr," said Willa. She was sore at her mother, she was at her wit's end. But Mattie didn't lose her temper. She said quite calmly, "How can you talk like that, Willa? What chance have I to play the martyr with all the work to do? I don't have the time for such foolishness."

Willa shut up and went to bed early. She lay there thinking of her mother's life, trying to see it. She didn't want her own life to end like that, in such miserable confusion. Once she thought that she was helping her mother by having her stay with them. Now it looked as if they were only hurting themselves. Tim was letting the whole works go to pieces. She could see for herself that he wanted it to go to pieces, that he didn't care. Perhaps he would not try to get the money for Mattie. Mattie was beginning to talk of leaving, but always in a roundabout way. She only talked like that to satisfy Tim's impatience, and Willa was sure she didn't mean anything by it. "When you're better," she said, "I'll want to go away. Of course it will take time yet. There's no hurry. I don't want to rush you."

Mattie talked like that, drawing the thing out, waiting for Tim to crash.

He didn't come back the next day or the next. Willa worried. Mattie said if she had the making of the laws she would see to it that incompetent persons weren't allowed to bring children into the world. Willa gave her one look.

"I won't have you talk about Tim like that," she said firmly. Mattie laughed uneasily.

"Oh, take a joke, can't you?" she said.

"Not that kind," said Willa.

"You're just like your father. You can say funny enough things yourself, but you can't take a joke." Willa shut her lips tight and didn't answer. It was nearly night again, and they were running out of groceries. The coal was low and there was no more wood. Mattie was out chopping up pieces of old fences for the kitchen stove. Along about seven, Willa heard the grinding of the old Ford up the slope by the house. Then she saw the headlights. She put on an old coat and went out.

The car came to a stop by the pump and Tim sat in the front seat looking at her. "Any luck?" said Willa.

"Well, yes," said Tim. "I had a long talk with them, see? They tamed down by the time I was through. I just told them I'd go to

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some one else. I said I had another publisher lined up. Gave them a little bull, see?" He laughed. Willa was so glad to see him in good spirits she forgot her troubles in the house.

"Gee, that's the stuff, Tim," she said. "What happened?"

"Well, we chewed the rag and they finally said they couldn't go on paying me, see, but they said they would get some magazine to serialize it, and the money I would get from the rights would keep me going on with the writing. They said they thought they could work it."

"Say, that's fine. If we could only just get enough to pay off Mattie."

"Don't worry. We'll pay her all right. I'll get it." He got out and turned off the lights on the car. "And I need another car too. I can't get along with this any more. I'm going over to Doylestown to-morrow and see what I can pick up. Why, I'll be having a thousand dollars soon. How's that?"

"We owe more than that," said Willa.

"I know it, but we don't have to pay it all at once. Take it easy. Nothing can bite you."

"Oh, you—" said Willa, "you and your take it easy." But they were in gay spirits. Mattie listened to Tim's report on his trip but she didn't believe a word of it. She said nothing and thought she would wait until she saw the money. She didn't think anything Tim might do was worth a thousand dollars. Why, it wasn't worth that many cents. It was just a lot of talk. He was stringing them along, that was all.

Willa knew what was going on in her mother's mind and she could hardly wait for results. Results were very slow in coming. Tim went ahead and bargained for a second-hand Pontiac, to be paid for in weekly instalments. Mattie could hardly believe her eyes when he drove it home and into the yard. There it stood, as big as life, and what was going to pay for it? There was no answer to that.

The car made a deep impression in the village and even the bank felt a little more lenient toward Tim. Tim had a fine time just driving around. For the first time, he had a car that really moved. He fixed up a little seat to hold the baby secure, and for days drove around and around with the kid, making up errands.

No word came from his publishers. He was nervous and slept badly. Mattie was sullen all the time and grumbled at everything. He stayed away as much as he could.

One afternoon he went to town for some groceries. Business was slow, and in the meat-market he and Larry got to talking. Larry said, "Wait until I'm through here and we'll have a beer."

"Sure," Tim said. "Take your time." He waited around until six and figured he could get the groceries back by seven. They never ate until eight anyhow. Besides, what was the rush? They didn't have to catch a train, did they? He and Larry went over to the back room of the cigar store. There were a couple of other guys standing around.

"Couple beers, Ed," said Larry. The two sat down and Larry grinned. "Pretty soon we'll have to be good and go home," he said. He would rather sit there and have some long discussion. It was dull at home. He had married the prettiest girl in town, but what of it? He couldn't talk baby talk all the time and she didn't want lovemaking, that is, not real lovemaking. She just wanted petting. The other made her sick. "It just makes me sick," she would whine. He hated to think of it.

"Drink up," he said to Tim. Tim was ready to drink up. Larry thought he would like to go some place with a bunch of the boys, just for a good time. They could go the rounds up the Delaware River, to the blind pigs, maybe take in a couple of houses, see life.

He began, "Say, Tim, how'd you like to go with us fellows some night, say Prof and me and maybe Kit Nelson, we'd have a lot of fun, up the river to the blind pigs, and"—he leaned nearer and dropped his voice, his eyes blazing—"and maybe take in a few houses, you know, see a little life, what do you say?"

"Not to-night," said Tim, "but some night perhaps. I'll let you know, Larry." He wasn't really listening to Larry. A couple of fellows at a table back of theirs were arguing. They were talking about the old Irish names.

"Hey," said Tim, turning. "What do you guys know about it? Don't you know you're talking like that in the presence of a genuine O'Flaherty?" He grinned, thumping his chest. "Every one of them a king," he kidded, rolling the words.

"The O'Briens were kings," said the big one, sticking out his jaw.

"The O'Neils were the real kings. My mother was an O'Neil. You can't pick bigger kings than they were."

"The O'Briens were kings," said the first fellow, sticking his jaw out further.

"Well, what the hell," said Tim. "They weren't the only ones."

"You guys were all kings," said a little fellow at the next table, who was rolling a cigarette slowly and with method. "I guess, yes, you were." He spit.

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"Say, what do you know about it?" said Tim.

"Easy there," said Ed, coming in from the store and looking around at business.

"Easy yourself," said Tim. "Don't easy me. My people were kings, genuine kings."

"Not of a real kingdom, they weren't," said the fellow with the jaw. "You can't fool me on the Irish. If I mistake not, your folks were just petty chieftains, living in the cliffs somewhere."

"That's all right," said Tim. "That's as it may be. Every Flaherty is a king. He's king of his jagged rock, if that's all he's got. He's king of himself. He's never imposed on in his liberty."

"Well, that's what's important," said Larry. "There's few can say that. Isn't that right?" He looked at the other kings ingratiatingly. The fellow with the chin was a fighter. It would be bad to start fighting.

"Oh, balls," said the little guy, lighting his cigarette. "Kings is out of date."

"The O'Neils were regular fighting kings," said the descendant of the fighting O'Neils.

"Oh, shut up, you and your kings," said the bird with the cigarette.

The Irish trio glared at the little man and Tim and Larry drank off their beers. It was nearly seven and Larry knew his wife would raise hell if he stayed much longer. "Gee, I have to beat it. But say, let's go on, you know, a round. What do you say, some night?"

"Sure," said Tim. "But what's your hurry? The town's not on fire." He himself got up very slowly and took his time starting for home. There was no use hurrying. It would give Mattie an exaggerated idea of her own importance if he came bustling home too soon. It was half past seven when he slowly opened the kitchen door and presented himself.

He and Mattie had a big row that night. Mattie sat through supper with her eyes blazing, looking ready to burst, but she never said a word until Willa was up-stairs in bed. Then she turned on Tim. "I didn't want to say it before Willa. I'm not going to have her worried, but it's about time things were different around here."

"I've told you all along what you could do," said Tim, easily, striking a match for a cigarette.

"How can I go? I'd be glad enough. I've poured everything I own down this sink. You tell a lot of lies."

"Easy," said Tim. "Be careful what you say."

"You tell Willa that money is coming. Well, where is the money? I'd like to know what we would have done this last week if Willa's father hadn't sent some more."

"I'd have money if you'd let me alone and allow me to get my work done."

"You and your work. You don't mean to say you expect money from that?"

"I won't even condescend to talk to you about it," said Tim. "Not for a minute. If you are so stupid as not to understand, I won't explain."

Mattie looked ready to burst at the word stupid. She opened her mouth, but not a word came. "All right," she finally said, "you keep your opinions and I'll keep mine. But right this minute I've got a matter of business to talk over with you." She suddenly made up her mind to make Tim come to scratch and produce some money. He could raise it somehow, she didn't care how. In the back of her mind she saw like a flash that she wouldn't care if he stole for it. Let him, it would be just the proper finish.

"See here," she said. "It's nearly time for me to pay my taxes on that block of property I own in Chicago. Where is the money coming from? You owe it to me, and if I'm going to get away from here I have to have money. I've poured all I have down this sieve."

"You said that before," said Tim. "How much do you need?"

"I need two hundred and fifty for taxes," said Mattie, "and you've got to dig it up, that's all. You owe me that and more than that. I won't count my labor here. I've done that for Willa, not for you. But the money I've sunk into this business—I've got to have two hundred and fifty dollars, and I've got to have it right away."

"What do you mean, right away?" said Tim.

"It's due now. I've got to have it in my hands in three days. I didn't want to worry Willa and you're never around."

"Listen," said Tim, in a very quiet voice. His voice only made Mattie angrier. It was like him to try to treat her like some child. Try to act superior. "Listen," said Tim. "Don't get hysterical. See. It won't get you anything. I'll get the money for you. All you had to do was ask for it. I'll see that you get it." He sat down and opened the newspaper and started reading. He left Mattie with nothing to say. She stared at him a minute and then went up to bed. She wasn't fooled by his easy manner, it was all a bluff. It wouldn't be easy to get that money. He might even be driven to—she wouldn't like to say what.

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Tim sat up late, reading the paper, drinking coffee, and making his plans. His nerves were on edge and when he finally lay down on the couch he found it hard to get to sleep. He dropped off asleep about four and was so dead to the world that he didn't hear Mattie when she came down-stairs around six to start up the fires and get breakfast for the kid. The woodbox was empty and Mattie stared into it and then came to the door and said, "There's not a stick of wood. If I'm to get the baby's breakfast, I have to have wood." Tim opened his eyes and lay looking at her. He had heard her, but he deliberately shut his eyes again.

"Didn't you hear?" said Mattie. "I've got to have wood if I'm to start this fire."

"Fire, what fire?" said Tim, opening his eyes, but not stirring.

"The kitchen fire, what else? If I'm to get the baby's——"

"I heard all that," said Tim. "Don't talk. It won't get you anywhere." He was mad, but he still kept his easy slowness, and taking his time, combed his hair, yawned, went outdoors, came back, lit a cigarette and at last slowly went out again and up to the barn. Outside the cold air woke him up, he went over to his car, got in and drove it down toward the road. Willa put her head out of the up-stairs window.

"Where you going this time of day?" She looked angry and it was the last straw.

"None of your damn business," said Tim. He suddenly made up his mind. He refused to look at her and went into the house for his overcoat. Willa got into a dressing-gown and came down-stairs.

"See here," she began. "It is my business. Is the baby yours or is he not? If he's your baby you simply have to take some responsibility about him. That's all there is to it."

Tim looked her straight in the face. She had never seen him look so ugly. He had the sudden feeling that perhaps Willa had put Mattie up to asking him for the money. He was suspicious of them both, and he felt as if Willa was a stranger. It was so long since they had been together, since they had talked, what was in her mind? He didn't know. He opened his mouth, then shut it, then he turned toward the door.

"Answer me, I tell you, where are you going?" Mattie came in the room and looked her I-told-you-so look at Tim. He couldn't stand it.

"Shut up," he said in a deadly voice. And he went out. They stood petrified. They heard the car start up and go down the hill.

"Here," called Willa, "you've forgotten your gloves." She rushed to the door.

"Don't go out," said Mattie. "You'll just catch cold. Let him go."

"Oh, he'll catch cold," said Willa, in a breaking voice. She got the door open but the car was gone. She came back shaking. She felt terribly afraid. It was her own fault for letting Mattie stay there so long. She shivered all over and went up-stairs. Mattie's look of triumph was too much for her to bear.

Tim made for the river road, the wooden bridge, and headed north toward New York. With one hand he felt in his pockets for a cigarette, for a match, and, counting, found he had about seventy-five cents. He couldn't get very far on that. The car was full of gas and he would need fifty cents for the tunnel. That left a quarter for coffee. He kept an eye open for the first place to eat. Driving did him good, he began to relax and to cheer up.

Damn Mattie! He'd get that money for her, he'd choke it down her face. Where would he get it? He hadn't the least idea. At this moment he couldn't see any farther than his nose. The car was running swell. He eased back and enjoyed himself. He thought over the first places he would try. Maplewood, but there wasn't much chance there unless they'd sold serial rights. There wasn't much use trying the bank. He counted over people he knew and wondered who would be good for that much. He ought to have five hundred. Five hundred would give Mattie hers and leave something for themselves. It would give him a break.

He'd get money to pay Mattie and if there wasn't enough to go on with his book, he'd work for it and save it, and then write the book on his own. But first Mattie had to go. Then he might get into real estate. Houses were waiting to be sold in their part of the country, old houses that were no good for farming any more. Soon people would buy them up as they did in Connecticut. Or he could sell stuff to the blind pigs.

There was nothing to get in a panic about. If he kept his shirt on, it would work out. He knew damned well Mattie expected him to pull a boner. She was big enough a fool to think he'd steal for her. For her? Say, that was a joke. Did she think he'd run his head in a noose for her sake? Not by a long shot.

No, he was through with that. So long as he was alive and out of jail anything was possible. Anything. People got in a sweat, they got hysterics because they'd never been really up against it. Once up against it, you learned

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to keep pretty cool. You took your time, see, and things gradually moved your way.

He stopped in Elizabeth for coffee, had two cups, and went out with sixty-five cents change. His head was heavy as a log and the traffic was thicker. Fifty cents went for the tunnel, and he swung under with the line of cars. A big truck roared beside him, he shot ahead at thirty-five, keeping seventy-five feet apart, his eyes open, seeing the police on the side, high up, like the blockhouses in the big jails.

He breathed easier once past those birds, the car made the upgrade and he was out in the open, wheeling around toward uptown New York. Now where? He headed for Jack Delaney's. He could cash a check, postdated. He didn't dare make it large and wrote one for two dollars, had a glass of beer, then went out to a lunch wagon for a sandwich. A shine cost him ten cents. His coat looked seedy, but he tried to brush it off and strutted into the publishers' trying to look up to snuff.

Maplewood was in but had no good news. Anything might break any day though. They were working along several lines. He hoped Flaherty was going right ahead.

"Going right ahead," said Tim. "Christ, on what? I got a family to support. I'm crazy thinking of it. Say, you don't go right ahead under those conditions. Think again." He was sore, but in a moment he thought better of it, changed his tune and gave Maplewood a little soft soap. After all, the guy might really fix him up if he didn't get excited. They parted warily but shook hands.

Tim tried the bank. They couldn't increase his loan. He called up half a dozen people. Nothing doing. He went around to see half a dozen more. Nothing doing. A lot of time was wasted listening to hard-luck stories. The afternoon was sliding by with not a thing turned up. He was tired out, what next?

In a blind pig he got a hot tip. A fellow told him of a woman over in Jersey who gave money to causes. Tim was a cause; well, why not try her? Tim was scared to call her on the phone. If he tried to talk over the phone, she would turn him down. He knew he ran the risk of making a trip and not finding her home, but he had to take it. He made another trip through the tunnel. Fifty over and fifty back, that would take a whole dollar. He rehearsed his speech to her on the way over. He would make her understand it wasn't charity. It was a sound business proposition, it was a loan. After all, their place in the country was worth more than the mortgages on it. He would explain that and he would tell her about his book and his future. He had bummed some cigarettes off the guy in the blind pig and he smoked to keep going.

The woman lived in Red Bank and no one was home. It was twenty-five after seven.

Tim bought two gallons of gas and had a hot dog and coffee. It was nine before he got back to New York. What next? In his pocket was a little loose change. He had nowhere to spend the night. If he parked the car and tried to sleep in it, some cop would make him move on. He stepped into a cigar store and began calling numbers. His head was in a whirl and he called numbers blindly, he called anybody he had ever heard of, without an idea of what he would say.

Some of the numbers answered, but his party was never in. His change dwindled and when he had twenty cents left he went out of the booth and bought a package of cigarettes. There was a newspaper there and he picked it up. It was turned to the Help Wanted column. A lot of people were out of work. It was a bad time to be hard up.

He had a nickel left and he went back to the booth for another shot. It was a slot machine and he had to win. He put his nickel in and waited. Then the buzz and the nickel shot back. He tried again, another number. His nickel shot back, like a bum check. It was no good. Luck was against him.

At half past ten he walked out to get some air. The nickel was in his pocket. He was on the corner of 10th and 6th Avenue, and was surprised at his location. How did he get there? He couldn't have told. He walked and wondered where he could go or what he could do. It looked as if there was nothing he could do but steal. He was no good for anything but that. He was sore thinking of it and the lousy world.

Looking up 10th he remembered suddenly, why, that's the street where Bill Bedlow lives. He began walking. Bill wasn't a friend of his, but he was a good friend to Phil Bessemer. Tim had met Bill several times and he had heard a lot about him. He even thought he and Bill had a little in common. Bill was being ground down by a father. He was really a wild fellow who wanted to tear loose, but he had got himself sewn up instead. If Tim had a mother-in-law, Bill had a father. Both had their noses pushed into something they hated.

He walked up to Bill's house and pushed the bell. It was a ground-floor apartment and he pushed hard, a long time, but nobody answered. Tim was overcome by his bad luck.

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He had only a nickel and he sat down on the cold stone step. He just sat there and let people pass and think he was drunk. He didn't have the luck to be drunk, he was cold sober.

He sat there for over half an hour, then saw Bedlow come along. He had a funny kind of a walk and Tim could tell it was his walk. He stood up and as Bill came up called out, "Hello, there!"

"Who is it? Say, this is nice. How are you, Flaherty?"

"Lousy," said Tim. "How's yourself?"

"I'm all right, I guess. What's wrong? Come on in." He put the key in the door and Tim followed him down the long hall. "Grace is gone, I'm batching it, did you know?"

"Is that right? Where's she gone?"

"It's a long story. I'll tell you." They went inside and switched on the lights and stood smiling. "Say, it's good to see you. How's Phil?"

"All right, I guess. I've been in so much hot water lately I haven't been around there."

"You have? Too bad. What do you say we have something to drink and maybe a sandwich?"

"Sounds great to me," said Tim. "I've been munching on hot dogs all day. Course I had a little beer."

"What's the matter?" said Bill. He was out in the kitchen rummaging the ice-box, and he looked up at Tim, who leaned against the wall looking all in.

"I'm up against it," said Tim. "I not only need money, I've got to have it. No two ways about it. And it's a business proposition if I could find any one with the jack. It's not charity. We've got that place in the country, values out there are rising all the time. It's got a fifteen-hundred-dollar mortgage and a second of four hundred, but it's worth a good deal more than two thousand dollars. It ought to be good for five hundred without any questioning."

"I should think so," said Bill, cutting the bread and laying hunks of cold ham on it. "You ought to get money on a proposition like that." Tim said he thought so too, but it didn't look like it. He didn't tell Bill of the many other debts chalked up against the place, but Bill had an inkling and couldn't help but feel a little cautious as he became more certain he was about to be asked for a loan. Before they had finished their sandwiches Tim blurted out, "I sure hate to ask you, but if you could do it, I'd never forget it. If you couldn't make it five hundred, perhaps three-fifty."

"I'd do it in a second," said Bill, "if I had it. I ought to have it, but I haven't. I haven't a red cent of my own. We've got this apartment, full of good-looking junk. My father paid for it, he pays the rent, he buys our clothes, they bring Grace perfume from Paris at twenty dollars an ounce. It's all to give us a taste of luxury so we won't be able to live without him. I never have a cent for a show or a book and that's a fact."

"I don't doubt it," said Tim. "Well, forget I asked you. Let's drink up." They drank up and Tim felt better. Bill loosened up, now that the money discussion was over. The two began to talk about themselves and their early lives, and what they had wanted to do. Bill was a good audience and Tim let himself out. He told the whole story of his life.

He came to his break from Matteawan and he wanted to laugh. He felt swell. Why, Mattie was nothing, just nothing. She couldn't stop him. Nothing would stop him. He was feeling very confidential and he even touched on Willa. The way he felt, he wasn't sure of any of his feelings except for the kid. He knew how he felt about the kid all right.

"You're lucky to have your boy," said Bill.

"I know it," said Tim.

"I'll probably never have a kid," said Bill.

"How's that, doesn't Grace want one?"

"She wants one, but I don't think she can have one."

"That's tough luck, if she wants one," said Tim. He wondered what was wrong with Grace. She was too good-looking and too restless for him.

"I didn't tell you where Grace is. She's in a rest cure. She had a bad breakdown this winter. I don't know how to please her. When we married I wanted to run away, the two of us, and go South and live on a plantation and work on it. I didn't care whether my folks threw me over or not. But Grace wouldn't hear of it. She made me get right down to business and I gave in to every condition my father made. I was a fool. If I'd held out, he'd have forgiven me; I'm his only son. Now I'm used to the grind and in a few years I'll get somewhere. But Grace is sick of it now. Maybe she thought the folks would come across in a big way, see, and they never did. They never will until they die. She's sick of it. She'd like to do something romantic, go on the stage, but she hasn't the stuff and knows it. She's nobody's fool, but I'm no good for her, I can't make her happy. Say, Flaherty, what's it all about?"

"Search me," said Tim.

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"The first three years I lived for her, see, and now I live for myself. I was ready to kiss the ground. But I found out something—What's the use talking about it? How you coming, Tim?"

"First rate, how about you?"

"Great," said Bill. "I'm glad you came. You can stay here all night, you know. I'll have to get to bed soon, I have to be down by nine."

They fixed up a bed on the couch for Tim, but he was feeling too good for sleep. He was ready to talk all night. He was even ready to talk about Bill and his troubles. The words rolled out of their own accord. He said the women would run things for themselves if they could, they would swamp a man's liberty if they could, they would tie him up in a parcel if they could. He said Bill was a fine fellow who had the sense to live his own life. He didn't know in just what way he achieved it, but he knew he did.

Bill said he did.

Tim said he would never get into such a scrape again, he would never rub his nose in it again. He would pay off Mattie and be free. Bill said, now he came to think of it, there was a way out.

"Listen, Tim," said Bill. "I'll tell you what I'll do. I've got some here my father gave me to pay for the rest cure. I was supposed to send it to-day, but I'll let you have it. I'll let the bill run and maybe by the time Grace is ready to leave, you'll have the money, you'll raise it on your house and can let me have it."

"Say, shake on it, Bill," said Tim. They shook hands and the relief was so great that Tim suddenly felt all in. They turned off the lights and got to bed. In the morning Bill was still ready to loan the money but he had been thinking it over and decided he had better make it three hundred and fifty instead of five hundred.

He ought to pay the rest cure something or they would be after his father. Tim agreed. Three hundred and fifty looked like a fortune. He even made out a note with interest and insisted on signing it. They had breakfast together and walked out the front door, side by side, immensely cheered.

Willa had no idea what Tim was up to. When he drove off with the car, she thought he might come back any time during the day. Later in the afternoon she was sure he would not come back. He was gone for good. He had another girl. The thing Mattie was always hoping for had come to pass.

Mattie, all consideration, bustled around hushing the baby and feeding him and asking should she do this and should she do that. "Do anything you like, mother. It doesn't matter," Willa said. They never mentioned Tim all day. Willa pretended her head ached and had ached for several days. She didn't want to give Mattie the satisfaction of thinking it was Tim who was troubling her.

Mattie saw through Willa's bluff. It made her all the more certain that Tim had bolted and would get into trouble. No doubt he had a girl in New York, and the next they knew he would either be locked up or would have run off with some other woman. There were always women of that stripe who were willing to pick up with anything in trousers. How they did it, she didn't see.

Willa sat with a set face until four o'clock, pretending to read. She went out for a walk alone and played with the idea of going over to the Bessemers'. At last she came home and tried to settle down for the evening. The baby had his bath and went to bed. They ate their supper. The lamps were lighted and Mattie began her eternal knitting. The rooms seemed suffocating but the thermometer read only 68. She put on her coat and walked outside. The darkness was very heavy and made the stars as they came out seem far away and small.

Suppose he never came back? She couldn't bear to be left in such a big stillness. She strained to hear a car coming, or any noise. There was nothing.

Something had to happen. They couldn't go on the way they had been going. But she hoped he would come back and give her another chance. They ought to have a chance, alone, together, with no one around. She couldn't bear to give Mattie the satisfaction of having broken it up. If it broke up, it should be when they were alone and had a chance to do it because of something in themselves. Tim must come back.

But if he had another girl he wouldn't care about that. She went in the house and up to bed. She lay quiet for hours and heard a train far off, and heard a hoot owl. A dog barked but she could hear no sound of a car coming. Toward morning she dropped to sleep.

In the morning Mattie was eager to begin a discussion about Tim. Willa didn't give her a chance and made up her mind to pretend that she knew all along where he was. At noon she went to the Larson place and got their boy to take a note to the Bessemers'.

"Tim never got back last night and I don't know where he is," she wrote. "I don't think

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anything is wrong, but I'm a little worried. Wish you would come over if possible, but don't let Mattie know I sent for you."

The Bessemers started at once and by the time they arrived, Willa was very cheerful and was feeding the baby. After a little talk she made some excuse to take them outside, and once out of Mattie's sight she began, "You don't know anything, do you?"

"Not a thing," said Phil. "I wouldn't worry if I were you."

"He never did a thing like that before. He just went off without telling where he was going."

"Perhaps he went in to New York," said Olive.

"He might have," said Willa. "Anything might be up. I haven't asked him a thing for months. I don't know what he's been up to, but I've had all I could do to get myself well. We haven't had anything to do with one another, we never get a chance to talk even. It might be some other girl. I thought he acted that way lately." Phil looked at his shoe and Olive said, "I wouldn't worry."

"I wouldn't blame him," said Willa. "Mattie should have left months ago. It's my fault. I'm just weak that way. She should have seen herself, but she doesn't see anything she doesn't want to see. I fought that out with myself to-day. I wrote my aunt, her sister, and told her she'd have to insist on Mattie's coming for a visit. She'll find a way, I know she will."

"Take it easy," said Phil. He was a little sore at Tim. It was a pretty note, running off like that and leaving the women up a back road, with no car. Mattie kept looking out the window and at last her curiosity got the better of her and she dashed out into the yard where they stood.

"You'll catch cold," Willa said.

"Well, some one has to take care of that poor baby," said Mattie, bustling the diapers off the line. Willa whispered, "She knows we're talking. Just can't stand it." They all three grinned, and the Bessemers said again, "Don't worry." Willa thought there was a chance that Tim had gone out on a tear with Larry, and would Phil go over to town and find out? If he saw Tim, please to say for her, that it was all her fault and that Mattie was going to leave soon.

Going down the hill, Olive said, "Don't you think we ought to have told her about that girl?"

"You're not supposed to know about that girl," said Phil. "I shouldn't have told you. Tim told me, not you. And anyhow, she's of no importance, of no earthly importance. Let him tell her if he wants to."

"Where is he, then?"

"Ask me another. He's probably got his tail in a sling, it looks to me." They drove straight for the town and were turning over the wooden bridge when Tim slid by in his car. They both put on the brakes. Tim backed up and lowered his window. He leaned out, grinning.

"Say, I got the money. To pay off Mattie."

"Great," said Phil. "Say, Willa was worried about you, see, and we were over there and she said if we saw you coming along to tell you it was all her fault and she's going to get Mattie off in a week or so. She wrote her aunt, she said."

"That's good. But it's not her fault. It's mine. For being such a damned soft-hearted fool. Well, never again. It was just a bad situation, but I've control of it now." He was grinning all over and waved as he started off. He was glad to hear Willa had worried. Poor old Mattie. She was licked. If she was going to her sister, they might drive Mattie out there. It would make her feel better and he wanted to see the mountains in Pennsylvania again.

The last time was years ago. He was hitchhiking from Buffalo. A nice guy picked up about six of them. Some got off to go to the fruit-picking. Others were coming on to the coal-mines. The fellow with the car hadn't much money. They all chipped in to buy some lunch, but couldn't get together much at that. They were all broke and anxious, and looking for jobs. But coming down those mountains, late at night, the air was grand and it was dark, and down below you could see the furnaces blazing and the slag pits burning, and the way the car slipped along, with the gas off, just drifting along, it seemed as if they were sliding down a wire. Yes, it seemed as if they were sliding down a wire on wings. It was like flying, and he had never felt so free.

He wanted to go down those mountains again, in the dark, just like that, and feel that way again.

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